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The Week

EVERYONE now realizes the folly of waiting a year after a new Congress has been elected before seating its members, and permitting the old one to reassemble and pass legislation during the interim. It is equally agreed that the new President ought to be inaugurated as soon as possible after the election at which he was chosen. Senator Norris has proposed a constitutional amendment which would bring the new Congress into existence in January, and inaugurate the President in the same month. But there are other questions in connection with the Presidency, of which much was heard during the late campaign. If there were no majority in the Electoral College, and the House and Senate should fail—as they easily might—to elect a President or Vice-President, what happens next? And what should we do if a President-elect were to die between the election and the meeting of the Electoral College? Or between the meeting of the College and the counting of the vote by Congress? Do the commissions of cabinet officers expire automatically on March 4, and would this prevent the succession of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, etc., in case no President had been elected? These are all matters as to which existing law makes no provision; and clearly, such possible emergencies ought to be taken into account. Representative John L. Cable, of Ohio, has introduced a joint resolution providing for a Constitutional Amendment Commission of nine members, three to be appointed from the House, three from the Senate and three by the President, to draw up proposals for needed legislation. Such a commission we regard as highly desirable; and in view of the necessarily slow process of reform, the sooner it is created and goes to work, the better.

THE Senate Judiciary Committee is investigating the charge, made in an editorial printed by the Hearst newspapers, that acceptance of the Underwood proposal for leasing Muscle Shoals to private individuals would saddle on the country "a scandal greater than Teapot Dome." We welcome the investigation, as we do every proceeding which will throw more light on the barefaced attempt which is being made to give away to private interests government property worth hundreds of millions of dollars and an almost inconceivable degree of control over the destinies of the South through this important source of her future hydroelectric power. The Ford offer was about as bad, from the government's point of view, as could be imagined; but the terms of the Underwood bill are little better, if they are not indeed worse. Property worth $150,000,000 would be turned over to private interests if the latter would pay four percent annually on the investment in the Wilson Dam, which is about one-third that sum. The alleged reason for this unparalleled gift is that the lessee would seek to develop new and cheaper methods of producing nitrates from the air, so that an industry can be built up which will compete successfully with Chilean nitrates. This cannot be done in America at present, though Germany apparently knows the secret. It is just as reasonable, however, to suppose that government chemists would develop the necessary new processes. The extraordinary haste with which, both at the time of the Ford offer and now, members of Congress have sought to rush through laws giving away Muscle Shoals, is painful to contemplate. Senators Wadsworth and Jones have both urged that final decision be postponed until a careful survey can be made and the facts deter-

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mined. Nearly a year ago the New Republic urged that this be done; and it remains as desirable today as it was then.

AS we go to press, the bill providing for an increase in postal employes' pay seems likely to be repassed over the President's veto. If it is, it will add to the department's expense an item of $68,000,000 a year; and in order to meet this, Postmaster General New has prepared a bill which would increase revenue $66,000,000. Rates on first-class matter, which earns a surplus of $80,000,000 a year, according to the department, would not be increased, except that postal cards would be sold for one and a half cents each. On second-class matter, newspapers and magazines, which now causes a deficit of $74,000,000, there is an increase of $10,000,000. The rate on editorial contents (scientific, agricultural, religious and fraternal papers being exempt) would be increased from one and a half to two cents a pound. The rate on advertising matter would be increased in the first, second and third zones by two cents a pound and in the fourth, fifth and sixth zones by one cent. Increases would also be made in third-class mail, $18,000,000, and parcels post, $12,000,000. If the postmaster's figures are correct, the increased cost to periodicals will still leave them enjoying a government subsidy of $64,000,000 a year, which would seem large enough to satisfy anybody not inordinately greedy. Yet we venture a prophecy that this attempt to reduce the existing subsidy by one-seventh will be met by an almost universal roar of protest from publishers, who will fight it as they have fought every similar suggestion in the past.

AT last we are beginning to get authentic information as to the state of German finances. According to our Trade Commissioner at Berlin, Mr. Douglas Miller, the receipts for the fiscal half year ending September 30 show a surplus of 149,000,000 gold marks. The total revenues for the half year amounted to 3,494,000,000 gold marks; for the year they are likely to exceed six billions. These are large figures, and are calculated to stir American interest in German investments. But there is another side to the story. The entire German national income cannot be much over 24,000,000,000 gold marks. The imperial taxes therefore absorb one-quarter of it; state and local taxes are supposed to absorb almost another quarter. The average German is paying about one-half his income in taxes. Americans who are moved by Mr. Mellon's solicitude over the supertax payers, who pay half their income of hundreds of thousands, ought to ask themselves about the probable mental condition of the German workman, who is taxed out of half of his miserable income of three hundred dollars. How long will a whole people stand taxes equal to one-half of its income? How long would we stand taxes that would pay off our whole national debt in one year leaving plenty besides for governmental running expenses? The Germans are being taxed to death. They are not likely to thrive under such a régime.

AN income of six billion dollars is low for an industrious and energetic people of sixty millions. But for the war the German income would be at least twelve billions, perhaps eighteen. The way out, it may appear, is for Germany to raise her income by extra effort, then the burden of taxation would be lightened. The Germans are willing. But before they can do it, they must be permitted to double and quadruple their foreign trade, exports as well as imports. What nation stands forth to take the lead in accepting four times the present volume of German imports? This is not to be expected of France, Italy and the new states created at Versailles. They have their own industries to look after. Russia would take all the German imports she could get, but might omit the item of payment. England and the British colonies could increase their purchases of German goods, but not four-fold. The United States could easily take four times its present imports from Germany, or eight times. It has the markets and the money. The world waits to see us do it.

IF the Council of the League did anything of importance at its Rome meeting, just concluded, it managed to conceal that fact from the correspondents. The reports of the latter justify the assumption that the Council marked time, not being allowed to do anything else. The British government, on the plea that it could not take action on the Protocol without ampler time for consulting the Dominions, managed to prevent any discussion of that document, the only major subject before the Council. Needless to say, Anglo-Egyptian relations were not discussed. The French offer to establish in Paris an International Institute for Intellectual Coöperation was accepted, the offer of a financial subsidy apparently outweighing the obvious desirability of making Geneva the seat of the Institute. Work was speeded up on the codification of private law, by the appointment of an interim committee. The Council resolved that it would meet in the future only in Geneva; and it took action of greater or less importance on a number of routine matters perpetually on its agenda. The next real test of the League's strength will come not earlier than this spring, when the Protocol must be faced and Great Britain will need to decide whether she intends to fish or cut bait.

THE French government's proposal to the League of Nations Council is to establish in Paris an "autonomous foundation" for intellectual coöperation. If the Chamber of Deputies will vote the appropriation, France will provide suitable housing for this institute together with an endowment of

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two million francs a year for seven years renewable at the discretion of the Chamber. The representatives of France are very careful to specify that they have no wish to control the administration of the institute. That will be, in any event, the responsibility of the Committee on Intellectual Coöperation of the League. Moreover, since the functions of the institute remain to be defined, there is no clear expectation that the French would profit as a nation in any way from the presence in Paris of the intellectual foundation. Nevertheless we feel that the French proposal is an improper one. Hospitality is one thing; subsidy is another. The expenses of this institute will be trifling as national expenses go. If the League cannot shoulder them, then it is, indeed, completely bankrupt. And any institute for intellectual coöperation must be wholly free not only from the fact, but even from the suspicion, of national influence or bias. Whatever the functions of this institute may come to be, the preservation of their strictly international character is peculiarly important.

THE stormy scenes which have marked the progress of the two opium conferences at Geneva have engendered more pessimism as to the final outcome than is warranted by the facts. As we go to press it is too early to say whether the other nations will again sidestep the American demand for an effective curb on the opium traffic, as they have done in the past. The first conference was of opium-producing nations only, and the United States therefore did not participate. Two projects were before it. The first was to make the production and distribution of smoking opium, used by the natives of Eastern countries, strictly a government monopoly, and an agreement to this effect was reached. It has not yet been signed, but the chances are that it will be. The second project was that the whole traffic should be brought to an end within ten years, by reducing the production ten percent per annum. This proposal, strongly endorsed by the American representatives, was rejected by the nations involved, on the ground that it moved too rapidly. With this point of view we have no sympathy whatever. If the world is ever to be rid of the curse of habit-forming drugs, ten years is not too short a time in which to rescue oriental peoples from opium smoking. It is difficult to believe that the old school diplomats who represented the European countries with Asiatic colonies, conscious as these diplomats are of the opium traffic's political and economic advantages to their governments, have any real desire to see it abolished at all.

ON the other hand, the forces which are working for suppression of the evil in the long run are likely to defeat the diplomats. The American program, as is well known, demands that the world production of habit-forming drugs should be limited to the world's actual medicinal and scientific needs—only an infinitesimal fraction of the present production. Public opinion in the United States, where the use of cocaine and heroin is growing so alarmingly, is solidly behind this proposal. It is also gaining adherents in the Western European countries among those persons who have not been misled by the vicious propaganda which argues that for natives of tropical countries opium is a food, or at least is not harmful as it is to white men. The truth about the traffic is gradually becoming known; time is on the side of the angels, whose emissaries in this case are almost exclusively American.

THE United States has taken an important step toward a closer relationship with the League of Nations, by accepting the invitation to join an international conference on the traffic in arms, munitions and implements of war which will be held in Geneva, on May 4, 1925. This meeting of course has nothing to do with limitation of armament, as to which a conference has been called for June. The May meeting will deal with the sale of arms and ammunition across frontiers, a business which has more to do with encouraging wars than is commonly supposed. The recent struggle in China, to take only the freshest example, was fought almost entirely with guns and ammunition sold to the rival Tuchuns by European munition makers. Both because the coming conference is likely to make this traffic increasingly difficult, and because it affords fresh proof of a more intelligent attitude toward the League of Nations on the part of our State Department, the news of America's participation is welcome.

WE hear much distressed comment on the growth of state and local indebtedness. While the federal government is paying off its debt at the rate of $800,000,000 a year, state and local indebtedness is increasing at the rate of a billion a year. That sounds worse than it is. There is, no doubt, some extravagance in state and local finance, but by far the greater part of the billion dollars raised through loans is laid out on improvements of permanent value, roads, bridges, municipal subways, waterworks, gas and electric lighting plants, hospitals, schools, university buildings. Barring graft, of which, by the way, there is a fair amount in private enterprises also, we have a billion dollars in tangible assets for the billion dollar increase in state and local indebtedness. The federal debt which we are paying off is represented by no tangible asset now in our possession. It is a part of the price of glory. We should have real reason for concern if instead of paying off such a debt we were increasing it; or even if we let it stand at its original maximum figure. As for the increase in state and local debts, the only important question is whether the property they secure for public use is worth the cost. Statistics of the gross amount of the debt and of its rate of increase do not answer this question.

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FUNDING the French debt appears to be a question we shall always have with us. President Coolidge gravely proclaims that this debt must be paid in full; every consideration of national honor and of international financial expediency demands it. Very well; the same considerations demand the payment by France of her debt to England as well. The sad fact persists that France can't pay either of these debts. For ten years the most she is likely to do is to balance her internal budget, and with interest accumulating and compounding, the debt will at the end of ten years be about twelve billions of dollars, with annual interest charges of half a billion. Is it likely that France can ever produce an export surplus sufficient to pay such an interest charge? She cannot, unless she develops a huge export trade, which would cause our own exporters grave concern and drive the Republican successors of President Coolidge to elaborate schemes for an even higher tariff than now afflicts us. And to assume that France can settle through German reparations payments is simply to chase the devil around the stump. Germany would have to develop the impossible surplus of exports.

UNDOUBTEDLY the best way out of the mess would be either to cancel the greater part of the French debt or to grant a long moratorium, without interest. But such a settlement would be obviously unfair to England, from whom we are exacting interest and amortization just as if she were not groaning under the burdens of the war. The British would have every right to protest our leniency to the French. In the game of power England and France are rivals. France, released from her obligations to pay, could spend money more freely on airplanes and submarines with which to threaten England. Our aloofness to European politics ought not to lend itself to a loading of the dice against England. Plainly it is our duty to treat France exactly as we treat England in the matter of the debt. If we grant a moratorium or reduced interest to France, we ought to revise our agreement with England, to place her on an even keel with France. We could do better than that, if we were governed intelligently. We could call a conference and wipe the slate clean of uncollectible debts and reparations that are merely a menace to the peace and economic health of Europe. But that is too much to expect of an administration whose chief quality is its lack of imagination.

The Work of Samuel Gompers

THE organization that was a few years later to become the American Federation of Labor began in 1881. In the autumn of 1885 the New York Sun delegated a reporter to "get up a story on the strength and purposes of the Knights of Labor." The Knights were at the height of their power and influence. They possessed what many would regard, now as then, as the ingredients essential to a satisfactory labor movement. Their social program was broad and attractive; toward the unskilled of industry they took a democratic and sympathetic attitude; and they were ready to throw down the gauntlet of battle as frequently in the political, as in the economic arena. But in the next year the Haymarket bomb was thrown; and by the close of the decade the career of the Knights was ended. What there was of a labor movement was inherited by the American Federation of Labor, under the leadership of Samuel Gompers. The Federation received as its legacy a handful of members, a few in the skilled crafts, an undisciplined and impermanent residue elsewhere; internal suspicion and dissensions and a hostile public opinion.

It is not such a labor movement that Samuel Gompers left when he died last week. Imperfect as it often seems in conception and in performance, it still has all of the appearance of solidity and permanence. When every allowance is made for the industries into which it has so far failed to penetrate, the sheer magnitude of the movement remains impressive. Disputes between and within unions occur only too frequently, but they no longer shake the movement to its foundations. Now it is the exceptional and backward community in this country which does not grant its labor organizations a status and a place in its counsels and life.

Changes so profound as these do not as a rule grow out of the conscious and deliberate policy of a single man. They were, however, in large measure due to the sensitiveness of Samuel Gompers to the American industrial situation and to his understanding of the requirements of an organized labor movement. During his tenure of office the massive machine for organizing the unorganized, for carrying on the slow, detailed, dull operations of organization campaigns was constructed. At its close the steel industry is not yet organized and unions are weak in other basic industries. But in a wide range of industries, like coal, railroads, building, printing, and clothing, large and powerful unions are firmly established. From less than 250,000 members in 1890 the Federation has grown more than ten fold to its present membership of nearly 3,000,000.

At the same time the unions have come more and more to assume the character of institutions. For the most part American labor organizations are not the sort that rise and fall with a spectacular strike. Members have been taught the need of treasuries, of a staff of paid officers, of permanent offices for their control and local headquarters. Administrations may be ousted, individuals defeated for office, but the staffs of the unions like the civil service of the government, carry on from one year to the next. No strike is regarded as having had a successful issue unless it leaves in the union dues-

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paying members who are determined to adhere permanently to the organization and to submit to its rules and regulations.

This process of establishing the organization and of tying members to it has likewise continued after the unions have won recognition in industry. The systems of trade agreements and of collective bargaining which are so significant a feature of American industrial relations in unionized industries give labor organizations a continuous function in industry. Whether used wisely or effectively or not, they have without question made the union the daily representative of its members in shop and factory. They constitute the foundations for most elaborate programs of workers' control, no matter how that control is defined or conceived. And in many cases the control already exercised under the terms of such agreements is much more effective than it is commonly supposed to be.

Attempts, not without success, have been made to settle disputes between unions by orderly constitutional processes. Although, during the administration of Gompers, the strong and large union has more than once swallowed up the small and weak one, and has thus achieved amalgamation by force, constant reiteration of the jurisdictional policy of the Federation has given its constituent unions assurances of security and has often stopped dualism at its source. When, as in the case of several of the building trades unions, edicts of the Executive Council were violated with seeming impunity, it was because the leaders of the Federation were unwilling to enforce a policy of consistency at the cost of destructive internal warfare.

The national union which now dominates the American labor movement could never have achieved its present position without the support of the Federation. The contrast between a scattered and decentralized labor movement, composed of many autonomous local unions, and the centralized form of labor organization now prevailing in this country is too striking to allow an underestimate of the contribution of the Federation in this regard. In no country of the world is the competitive industrial area so extensive as in the United States. Nowhere, also, are individual employers and groups of them so powerful as here. No American labor movement could successfully have faced these conditions without a unified policy and consolidated resources.

In the reaction to what often appears to have been the political impotence of the Federation, its political policy has been subjected to strong and constant criticism. This attitude overlooks the genuine, if unostentatious, achievement of the Federation in this field. The influence of the many city and state federations of labor in this country is known to the state legislatures and city councils even if it is not appreciated by the general public. From the passage of laws establishing state industrial commissions to the enactment of workmen's compensation legislation, these local agencies of the American Federation of Labor have been real sources of political power. To compare their achievements with those of an independent labor party is an exercise worthy of speculation, but it is a mistake, on the record, to minimize the magnitude of their contribution.

Much of the suspicion and hostility which has surrounded the activities of American trade unions has been, throughout most of the country, largely dissipated. Even the outlook for a decent legal status is now not nearly so dark as it was when Gompers was held for contempt of court for violating the injunction in the Buck's Stove and Range Company case. The uninterrupted pounding on the courts and the injunction for more than a generation has had its slow but certain effects. It is possible now to speak of the future widening activities of labor unions without, in the same breath, apologizing for them and justifying their existence. Success in reassuring the public is, no doubt, in part due to the accident of war, which gave Gompers the opportunity to enunciate the aims and methods of a labor movement, in terms calculated to win confidence and support. Here, too, Gompers may not, as some believe, have acted in all wisdom and made the most of his opportunities and influence. But that his policy produced a distinct turn in public opinion cannot be denied.

It is not easy, in the light of the experience of the American Federation of Labor, to separate the ideology from the problems and accomplishments of a mass movement. During Gompers's long term the task before the leaders of trade unionism was that of building foundations, winning recognition, and establishing a status. The ideas of the labor movement in this period were as much, if not more, the outgrowth of these practical requirements as of the views and desires of its leaders. It is not at all clear that this first phase in the history of the American labor movement is ended. When it is, the movement will require a fresh and more imaginative ideology and a new type of leader to make the new program effective.

The Goose-Step and the Golden Eggs

DURING the past few weeks two American millionaires have announced gifts totaling considerably more than fifty million dollars. All of Mr. Eastman's benefaction and a considerable lump of Mr. Duke's go to collegiate educational institutions. It is an educational event of large magnitude, but one that will be greeted by different people with different emotions. Mr. Upton Sinclair and such readers as found the Goose-Step a book worthy implicit belief will doubtless gnash their teeth. We can almost see the Pasadena prophet

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inscribing upon the portals of Rochester University the formula, "Kodak as you go," or upon the erstwhile Trinity College the words, "Duke's Mixture." On the other hand, many excellent and cultivated people will hail the event as a fresh proof of the fundamental soundness of capitalistic society. The American millionaire, they will insist, no less than the dukes, princes and doges of European civilization, exerts his power for the support and incubation of the higher culture.

Both these judgments are fundamentally sound. In subscribing their money in huge sums to colleges and universities these princes of finance have nevertheless been guilty of an act of gross philistinism. As many commentators have already noted, both Mr. Duke and Mr. Eastman have allowed their charity to begin, uncritically, at home. Each has poured out his munificence upon institutions already well established and flourishing. These are excellent schools, no doubt, but there is nothing particularly distinguished about them to justify such enormous bounty. Within the length and breadth of the country there must be scores of colleges and universities, to say nothing of other types of schools, which are striking out upon new paths, organizing fresh enterprises, developing novel methods and curricula, or otherwise pioneering in such a fashion as presumably to merit rather special consideration from those who think of themselves as the partisans of civilization in America. Yet the pioneer colleges and the experimental schools are allowed to languish while the excellent but safely conservative institutions are fattened beyond recognition.

The inference is that the American millionaire is not interested in novel types. He does not want "something different" in colleges. His mind, running true to good Rotarian form, pictures his native state and city as the home of "bigger and better" universities of the established type, another Harvard, a second Princeton, or a Yale of the middle south. Bearing the leading benefactor's name.

Nor has the "interlocking directorate" been forgotten. Each of the gifts of the past week has contained an extraordinary provision, the effect of which is to link education with finance. Mr. Eastman, instead of turning over to his beneficiary a lump sum in more or less mixed securities the market value of which constitutes the total of his gift, has arranged to sell to the university trustees a huge block of holdings in the Kodak company at about half the prevailing price. This margin constitutes the gift. Now Mr. Eastman has disavowed any intent that his trustees, possibly in combination with those of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes, shall control the future of the company whose stock they will control. They may dispose of their securities in the market, if they please. Nevertheless, it is unreasonable to suppose that a business man would have devised so complicated a method of bequest to no purpose. Mr. Eastman evidently intends that the university trustees shall maintain the integrity of the ownership of the company.

Mr. Duke is perfectly explicit on this point. The board of trustees created in his deed of gift is specifically instructed to hold the securities of the Duke companies in perpetuity. One of the trustees' functions is the management of the business. No one has ventured to draw the parallel of the case of Daniel Drew, who made the Erie the seat of his invention of watered stock and held the principal of his gift to Drew Theological Seminary using it as private capital in his personal speculations in the stock exchange. Further financial operations are doubtless not the object of Mr. Duke's deed of trust. On the contrary, the motive which has inspired him to provide for the integrity of his companies is probably the same ingenuous vanity which is expressed in the designation of "Duke University."

Nevertheless the fact remains that boards of trustees competent to manage multi-million dollar corporations are not competent to exercise anything more than a benevolent quietism over the educational institutions intrusted to their care. Their function is to be conservators of established businesses and established educational types. They will not, as Mr. Sinclair naïvely hypothesizes, send hourly memoranda to their faculties, communicating their most recent revelations on the topics of the hour. That aspect of the matter can be left to the natural conservatism of such professional bodies as the faculties themselves represent. All that is necessary is the atmosphere of peaceful preservation.

It is possible to induce an extreme depression by the morbid contemplation of this picture. Yet here is no particular discouragement. No new depravity is ushered into our civilization by such acts of endowment in perpetuity as these. On the contrary, the schools which are thus provided for are not only an already familiar and accepted part of our economy: they represent on the whole its better side. From the point of view of those advanced spirits who are conscious of a mission to evangelize the world, artistically or intellectually, it must be a matter of severe disappointment to see the major benefactions go to the Royal Academies and National Establishments of whose decay they are so acutely conscious. But from the point of view of the mass of the people the objects of the patronage of the multi-millionaire must seem quixotically refined and intangible. It would be silly to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs because of a special taste for platinum.

Educational institutions, like all institutions, are hardy perennials. The hardiest and most perennial necessarily dominate the landscape. The rain falleth on the just and on the unjust, nourishing both in proportion to the depth of their roots. Sports, the new, the unusual, the experimental, are not a part

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of this picture. Neither millionaires nor princes feel the necessity of endowing new civilizations.

The mission of millionaires, in short, is to endow prevailing institutions, and the business of their trustees is to perpetuate their trust. In doing so both are but playing their appointed parts. The invention of better institutions is, by the logic of civilization, the work of independent genius, and its support is the responsibility, not of generic "wealth" which is born conservative, but of the equally rare bird, the experimental millionaire.

Child Labor: Why They Invoke States Rights

LITTLE by little the attack upon the Child Labor Amendment is shifting its base from the untenable position that empowering the federal government to regulate child labor is an attack upon the integrity of the home, an invasion of the right of the parent to dispose of the time and labor of his children to suit his fancy. The parent has no such right under any civilized government. Everywhere the state asserts the right to regulate or prohibit child labor. With us, the governmental body which at present exercises this power is the state instead of the nation. The Child Labor amendment proposes to give the nation a share in this power. The issue, therefore, is not the family or the individual versus government, but state versus nation. This the more intelligent advocates and opponents of the amendment recognize clearly.

The seriousness of the issue does not lie in the terms and objects of the amendment itself. It is silly to talk of an army of federal bureaucrats roaming over the land devouring the taxpayer's substance and setting his children against his authority. The Children's Bureau, or whatever other organ of enforcement may be created, will have a perennial fight on its hands to secure appropriations sufficient for the enforcement of such laws as Congress may enact. The Appropriations committee is not going to find funds for inspectors enough to look into every kitchen, every field and garden. Under the two child labor laws enacted by Congress and later declared unconstitutional there was close coöperation between the federal and state authorities. This would be true under the amendment. The state, retaining exclusive control of the field of education, is too strongly entrenched to be thrust aside in the common enterprise of establishing the conditions under which children live. Where the state law is adequate Washington will be chary in supplying enforcement agents. Where the state law is defective a corps of federal inspectors will be required. No state that resented their presence would be forced to put up with them. It could bring its laws up to the minimum standard.

Even if the result of the amendment were to transfer the interest in child labor legislation to the national government instead of that of the state, it would not be true, as it is frequently asserted, that the states would be shorn of a legislative field in which they are actively working. Since 1912, as the New York World points out in one of its weightiest leaders, there has been great activity in child labor legislation. The World does not point out that the activity was greatest while the abortive federal child labor laws were in force, and has nearly disappeared since the second one was declared unconstitutional. This may be explained in part by the greater difficulty of persuading legislatures to act, now that a state with high standards is again exposed to the competition of states with low standards. But the chief part of the explanation must lie in the decline of democratic idealism that has marked the last years. With due allowance for the probability of a recovery of the democratic spirit, we may still assert that the child labor issue itself does not stand as a major one, either in legislation or administration. It is attacked as a symbol of something bigger and more fundamental in our national life.

The real issue is the old one of states rights, the most momentous domestic issue in our history. It has figured in innumerable political campaigns; it cost us a civil war. It is no wonder that to many Americans this issue should take on almost a religious character. When so much emotion has been compacted into a single formula men cannot be expected to exhibit calm reason. They cannot be expected to distinguish between what is fundamental to the American system of government, the restriction of the federal government to the field expressly assigned to it by the Constitution and the reservation to the states of all residual powers not expressly denied to them, and what is unessential and requiring adaptation to the times, the definition of the field in which the federal government may work. States rights are invaded when the federal government oversteps the limits set by the Constitution. If such practices were permitted the states would be in great danger of being reduced to the position of mere administrative areas, like the French departments. When the people of the United States, by due constitutional process, confer upon the federal government powers it has not hitherto possessed, there is no invasion of states rights, even though the states may incidentally be shorn of some of their powers. Under our system there are neither state nor national rights superior to the will of the sovereign people.

The founders of the Constitution conferred upon the federal government such powers as at the time were ample to protect the common interests of the people. Control of foreign relations, of foreign and interstate commerce, of the coinage, the power to make war or peace, and apparently adequate power of taxation—were these not sufficient for the management of the common affairs of thirteen

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sparsely settled states strung along the Atlantic seaboard, with each community leading almost a self-sufficing existence? The founders of the Constitution were practical men and would no doubt have conferred broader powers on the federal economy if the conditions of the national government had required it. They did not imagine that they were fixing for all time the spheres of the federal and state governments. Indeed, Washington, seeking in his Farewell Address to define the essence of American institutions, does not bring forward the Constitution itself, but the power of the people to change it.

An immense revolution in economic life has taken place since the adoption of the Constitution. An unforeseeable mobility of population, commerce and industry has characterized the century since the industrial revolution got well under way. Organized capital has risen to the rank of an economic political power of the first magnitude; organized labor has gained a status that to the founders of the Constitution would no doubt have seemed most dangerous. A few optimists may hold that these new forces need no regulation; that whatever emerges from the womb of time is necessarily well born, destined to enrich the life of mankind. History and common sense preach no such dogma. The state cannot be indifferent to the forces working within it. A government which acts as a trustee for the common interest must hold itself in readiness to control and check if necessary forces that may operate subversively to the good of the people. And in a country of divided sovereignty, like the United States, common sense would seem to ordain that power to cope with new forces should be conferred upon state or nation primarily with a view to efficiency.

Twenty years ago this appeared to be recognized by intelligent men of all parties. Only the Bourbon rejected violently the program of extending the powers of the federal government to cover the fields in which state action was ineffective, and the establishment of the principle of harmonious state and federal coöperation. But in these two decades a change appears to have come over the public mind. The Bourbons have come out into the open with the anti-constitutional doctrine that the Constitution must be left intact as it stands.

One reason for this change in public sentiment lies on the surface. We have a federal prohibition law, and its administration is a scandal and a disgrace. We had state prohibition laws before. What of their enforcement? It was everywhere a scandal and a disgrace. Both state and nation have tried their hands at enforcing unenforceable laws. They have failed ignominiously. But the state failure has been swallowed up in the more recent federal failure. Just now the burden of disrespect has been shifted from the states to the federal government. This has no bearing, to be sure, on the question of the distribution of power between state and federal governments. It bears on the limitations of government in general, not of any particular branch. But the discrimination is too nice for popular currency.

Another reason, and a far more significant one, is the immense progress in self-consciousness that has been made by the leaders of big business. With the consolidation of their economic position they grow more and more concerned over the weakness of their political position. They are afraid of the American people, and of the governments which may at any time fall subject to the control of the American people. The chief virtue of our constitutional system, as they see it, is its inefficiency. The federal government, which alone holds jurisdiction co-terminous with the American business field, is without adequate powers of regulation. The states have sufficient regulatory power, but because they are arbitrary fragments of the national economic unit, they are unable to use it effectively. In the no man's land between state ineffectiveness and federal incompetence, business may build up an economic state of its own, unhampered by regulation, insured against attack by the constitutional safeguards of property.

Big business has no considerable stake in child labor as a productive force. The 200,000 children under sixteen employed in industry can produce no tremendous sum of profits. What leads big business to oppose the amendment is the principle involved: namely, the principle that when the American people desire to regulate industry, they shall have the constitutional power to do so.

We think big business is mistaken in its tactics. Suppose it forces a crystallization of our constitutional development. What then? Is it to be supposed that the American people, this huge and unruly colossus, will lie on its back forever, held motionless by Lilliputian legalistic strings? In the long run, there is no safety for any interest in America, except by the favoring will of the people, won by adequate show of merit.

Down with the Dime!

EVERY schoolboy knows — every modern school boy—that it is an injurious and dangerous thing to leave powerful instincts without material on which to work. Denied material they turn in upon themselves and generate horrid monsters of the imagination and of behavior. Yet we Americans are just now denying all access to material to one of our most powerful instincts, an instinct that shows a faint spark if not a hotly glowing flame in every breast. We refer to the instinct of reform. Not the keenest eye nor the most powerful field glass will disclose the tiniest visible reform anywhere within the wide horizon.

It is the fault of the reformers. They have not recognized the duty of presenting projects of re-

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form commensurate with the times. In the spacious days of 1917 it was very well to agitate for a new social order, for a world made safe for democracy, for a parliament of mankind and an equal association of all nations. Then the reforming instinct could demand and obtain a brave diet. The present times are narrower. The lean kine have swallowed the fat, the minnows have devoured the whales. Reform is still possible, nevertheless, provided it is adapted in its proportions to the moral and spiritual conditions of the day. We are here proposing a reform which obviously meets the specifications, the dropping of the dime from coinage, the calling in and melting up of the outstanding stock, reservation being made of an adequate supply for numismatic collections and for the ear pendant trade of North Central Africa.

The case against the dime is overwhelming, once one stops to reflect on it. The dime is a terrible waster of time, and time is money, itself. We have not recently noted in the Subway Sun the number of nickel subway or L rides purchased in a year by the New York public, but we are safe in assuming it to be at least 800,000,000. Incomplete statistics collected by ourselves indicate that at least three-fourths of the buyers of rides, or 600,000,000, have to stop at the booths to make change. Those who seek change for a dollar or more are a negligible fraction. Almost the whole work of the change booth consists in furnishing nickels for quarters or dimes. It is the common practice at the booths to hand out one nickel and two dimes for each quarter. This means that it takes three separate operations to transform a quarter into five nickels. From our inspection of the queues before the change booths we estimate that the time lost in line, plus the loss of time from trains just barely missed, amounts to two minutes for each exchange operation. Six minutes instead of two are lost on each quarter, because of the existence of the dime. On the basis of these data a simple calculation will indicate that patrons of the L and subway lose 800,000,000 minutes a year or 13,333,000 hours. At the low estimate of fifty cents an hour this amounts to a money loss of $6,666,000 per annum.

Add to this the loss of time and money due to the slowing up of all street cars to take on queues of passengers checked in their movement by the delay in making change at the entrance. Add the loss in time at telephone booths while the insouciant drug or cigar clerk considers whether he will provide you with nickel change or not. Add all the other minor occasions when one waits for a nickel in change. Certainly the aggregate money cost will run well over $15,000,000 for New York alone. For the whole country the cost may be conservatively estimated at not less than $50,000,000.

The old-fashioned Democrat will say that the case is properly one for self-help. Let every individual who objects to waiting for change provide himself at his bank with nickels up to his probable limit of consumption. He will not have to tail in on a queue; but he will suffer just the same from the retardation of surface car traffic. The final answer to this objection, however, is that it would require executive ability of a high order to keep the supply of nickels flowing, and people of high executive ability aren't in the picture. They ride in limousines.

We might point to the maleficent influence of the dime as an everlasting temptation to public utility companies everywhere to jack up their fares to the ten cent level; a temptation to the vendors of cigars and soft drinks to make ten cent minimum prices. But we wish to rest our case with considerations that will recommend themselves to everybody with a spark of reform in his breast. On the point of saving time the trust magnate can join whole heartedly with the street sweeper. All sorts of reformers can come in, tax reformers, land reformers, labor reformers, spelling reformers, moral reformers; Andrew J. Mellon, W. Z. Foster and all the range between. The reform we are urging is not yet a party issue, and we are opposed to making it such in spite of its obvious suitability as a main issue between the Republicans and Democrats in the next election, and in spite of the ease with which it would throw off singing slogans like "Up with the nickel, down with the dime!"

We should gladly head a movement for setting this reform in motion, but to be frank, we are afraid our radical reputation might prejudice the cause we have at heart, and we are public spirited enough to sink our private prestige in the common good. We suggest that a group of men of unimpeachable conservative standing form a preliminary organization and found a permanent committee with a chairman whose name will give to the movement the weight it deserves. The ideal chairman would of course be President Coolidge who, according to his running mate, Mr. Dawes, thinks more of the nickels than anyone else in the country. But since President Coolidge already has job enough to keep him busy, we respectfully suggest, as a most appropriate second choice, President Nickelous Murray Butler.

Write to your Congressman. But do *not* mention the New Republic.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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The Banker's Lament

THE Comptroller of the Currency has just issued his annual report, in which he shows, among other things, the profits of national banks for the year ended June 30, 1924. At the same time the Federal Reserve Board has given out the earnings of its state bank and trust company members. From these reports we learn that the earnings of all national banks were 8.11 percent on their capital stock and surplus combined during the year. The state banks and trust companies earned an even 12 percent. The earnings of all these member banks combined were 9.11 percent on capital and surplus. They earned this after paying taxes and all expenses, including interest on both borrowed money and deposits; and after writing off losses of every sort.

This showing of profits brings to mind the New York bank president who remarked lugubriously that he had "been in the banking business for thirty years, and was bound to say that he found it harder and harder each succeeding year to make profits." The remark elicits a smile from the informed. The national banks of New York City earned 10.41 percent during 1924, while the other member banks in New York earned even more. For the entire New York Federal Reserve district earnings averaged 11.82 percent. Despite the bank president's lament, it seems that the banker has weathered the business depression better than anyone else.

During the years 1921 to 1924 inclusive, which span the period of the post-war depression, all the national banks of the United States combined earned on the average 8.45 percent on capital and surplus. In the depression of the 'nineties these banks had earned an average of 5.06 percent during the four years 1894 to 1897. In the four worst years of the depression following 1873 they had earned 5.87 percent. In 1876 the national banks of New York City actually earned less than 1 percent on their capital stock and surplus. During the 'nineties they got down to almost 5 percent.

In the recent post-war depression they have never fallen so low as 9 percent in any single year. During the last four years the national banks of New York City have averaged 10.41 percent. This is a higher average than they had earned in any decade preceding 1900. The bankers remark must be set down to the innate modesty of that profession. For if one were boastfully inclined he could write a most flamboyant article on the efficiency of the New York banker in avoiding the consequences of business depression.

Elsewhere in the nation there are bankers who have true cause for lamentation. The Comptroller's report shows that all the banks in the western group of states had an actual loss after making all charges. This includes Montana and North Dakota in the north and Oklahoma in the south. The national banks of Iowa, taken as a whole, also show a loss. The Minneapolis and Kansas City Federal Reserve districts both showed profits of almost exactly 1.75 percent for all their member banks combined.

The larger earnings of the New York City banks are not due to any permanent advantage attaching to the banking business in the centre of the country. Both the gross and net earnings of the national banks in these western states were higher than in New York in the two decades ending with 1920. During those twenty years New York earned 12.24 on the capital stock and surplus of all national banks, while the western group averaged 13.50 percent. The difference in their earnings during depression years is to be explained rather by the fact that the bankers in the east managed to avoid losses on both loans and investments more skilfully than did the western bankers. Thus the national banks of New York City, after paying their expenses but before deducting their losses, had left almost 15 percent on their capital stock and surplus. They charged off a little less than four percent in net losses. This left them profits of over 10 percent. The national banks in the group of western states had slightly over 11 percent before deducting losses. But their net losses charged off absorbed this entire amount and something more, so that the income account finally shows a loss.

The manner in which sound bank management as measured by the avoidance of losses operates to determine banking profits is well illustrated by the member banks of the Philadelphia Federal Reserve district. The gross earnings of those member banks are only 35 percent of their capital stock and surplus. As against this the members of the Boston district earned 45 percent. But the percentage of losses in New England was three times as high as in the Philadelphia district. As a result the net profits in the Philadelphia district was 10.97 percent as against 7.57 in the New England district. The national banks of the city of Boston suffered such heavy losses during the year 1924 that their net profits were only 3.03 percent. The highest earnings discoverable in the statistics are to be found in Jacksonville, Florida, and Birmingham, Alabama, both of which had profits of over 17 percent. In the latter city the amounts recovered during the year on losses previously charged off actually exceeded losses for 1924.

The following table shows how slight were the variations in net earnings before losses were taken care of; and how much the final net profits depend upon the amounts charged off for bad loans and in-

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vestments. The figures are percentages to capital and surplus for all member banks of each Federal Reserve district:

	Net Earnings before deducting losses	Net Losses Charged Off	Net Profits
	%	%	%
Boston	12.30	4.73	7.57
New York	15.10	3.28	11.82
Philadelphia	12.65	1.68	10.97
Cleveland	12.14	2.50	9.64
Richmond	11.59	2.90	8.69
Atlanta	12.49	4.20	8.29
Chicago	12.91	4.30	8.61
St. Louis	12.52	4.80	7.72
Minneapolis	8.90	7.18	1.72
Kansas City	12.71	10.92	1.79
Dallas	12.68	7.27	5.41
San Francisco ...	14.26	5.51	8.75
Total United States	13.20	4.09	9.11

Among the items which determine the profits of banks one commands particular attention at this time. This is interest paid on deposits. For while the profits of all member banks amount to a little over 9 percent on capital and surplus, the interest paid to depositors comes to more than 15 percent. One of the reasons why the Minneapolis district shows such low earnings even before deducting losses, in the table above, is to be found in the fact that it paid its depositors interest amounting to 21 percent of its capital and surplus, while the other banks have paid only 15 percent.

During the fiscal year 1924 the banks paid almost exactly 2 percent on their deposits. Their net profits after losses amounted to only 1.2 percent of their deposits, and to 1.26 percent of their loans and investments combined. The interest paid depositors was more than twice as large as the dividends distributed to the stockholders of the banks. This item of interest on deposits is the banker's true cause for lament today. He cannot continue paying the interest which was paid during 1924 and previous years, in the face of the declining rate for money which we have witnessed during the last six months. Unless the interest rate rises bankers must reduce the rate which they pay on deposits. In some cities the reduction has already begun. Call rates, time money on the stock exchange, and commercial paper rates are 2 percent below a year ago. If the assets of the banks consisted entirely of these items, such a decline would wipe out banking profits. But the banks have in addition many loans on real estate mortgages. Here the interest rate is higher and is fixed by contract for considerable periods. They hold large volumes of investment securities, also, on which the rate fluctuates comparatively little. While the business revival will doubtless raise some of these money rates, it is not likely that a serious fall in profits can be avoided except by cutting the rate paid to depositors.

The existing rates of interest on deposits came about as a result of the unusual profits which banks earned during the two decades from 1900 to 1920. The average earnings on capital and surplus combined averaged almost 10 percent over that entire period. They would have been even higher had it not been for the ever-increasing amount paid to depositors, for the gross earnings of national banks increased from 20 percent at the end of the last century to 52 percent in 1921. In 1900 banking profits amounted to almost half of the gross earnings. If this situation still prevailed, banks would be earning more than 20 percent on their capital and surplus today. The workings of competition among individual banks have kept profits at half this level. The other half has been driven into the hands of depositors by the bidding of the individual banks for the patronage of their depositors. If interest rates decline gradually over a number of years, as many financiers believe they will, interest on deposits will tend to fall. In the meantime it is more than likely that we shall see some decline in the level of banking profits.

DAVID FRIDAY.

Travelling in America

I SPENT but four months of the seven that I was in America in travelling, and I regret it, for I have never been in any country where the mere act of journeying from place to place was more seductive. Willingly could I, who have always imagined that I loathed travelling by land, have done nothing but wander on from town to town up and down the length and breadth of the United States. This is partly due to the genius of the place, but it is also due to the extreme comfort of American trains. It is true that they are all of them equipped with instruments of torture in the form of an apparatus known as the air-brake, which works in such a way that every time the train starts there is a preliminary jar so severe that it feels as if not only every carriage but every individual had been struck a heavy blow with a club. The explanation is, I fancy, that the average American is so full of nervous energy that he can suffer this violent shock without the pain that we depleted and oversensitive creatures feel; but it may be that some slight measure of discomfort has to be inserted into the railway system to deter people from spending their entire lives on the train. I found myself sometimes regretting that I need ever step out of the Pullman car save to have a bath.

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It is, you see, so exquisitely irresponsible from the very beginning. One packs one's trunks, in no particular hurry; it will do if they are ready an hour before starting. One gives them to the hotel porter, who in return presents one with checks. Never does one think of them again till one gives the checks to the express company at the station where one ends one's journey, and it delivers them at one's hotel. This, you will allow, is different from England where one has to keep watch on one's luggage as on a sick child. Thus disembarrassed, one goes nonchalantly to the train which, should one be in New York, starts from a cathedral. Europeans to whom I have said that the Americans are geniuses in architecture would be angry with me for having understated the case if I could show them the Pennsylvania station in New York. We in Europe have tried to treat the railway station in the grand manner. England made its great comic efforts in the cruet-stand Gothic of St. Pancras and the monumental mason's nightmare of Euston, and then gave up the attempt and relapsed into the formless chaos of Victoria and Waterloo. Germany kept up the struggle longer, but to no good. Leipzig Hauptbahnhof, vast as it is, is only remarkable because it produces, as one could not have believed that masonry could, the effect of obesity. One longs to advise it to give up bread and potatoes. But here, in New York, is a marvel of noble stone arching over an infinity of pearly light, with a certain ultimate beauty in its proportions which gives a solemnity to all that happens beneath. The crowds hurrying between the booking offices and the platform look dwarfed, yet for all that, more and not less significant, as processions of worshipers do in great churches. For some things—and those great and admirable things—one must go to America.

The Pullman car is too hot, but then every interior in America is. That is why one acquires on arrival the art of continually slaking oneself with ice-water. It has however every other advantage except reasonable temperature. There is abundant space round one's arm-chair. One's suitcase and attaché case are not exiled to a rack but stand openable at one's knee. Newspapers and books—quite good books—are sold on the train. One is encouraged to carry on one's correspondence by telegram. In the dining-cars there are meals that the Americans esteem but lightly, but which nevertheless are better than most meals one gets in quite good hotels in provincial England. And one is adopted by a Negro porter. For no extravagant recompense in the way of tips he is prepared to act as one's father and mother for the duration of the journey. He brushes one's clothes, he polishes one's shoes, he will even very respectfully draw one's attention to the fact that one is nearing one's destination and that one's hat is not on at quite the proper angle, and he does one a service deeper than these by showing one what life might be if one kept the heart of a child, and laughed aloud at happiness, and drooped for not more than a minute when things went wrong. Sad he is fundamentally, for he is a strayed child, a lost child, who will never get back to his own nursery in Africa but must wander for ever in this grownup world of the United States, but he gets an exquisite infantile glee out of the simplest things. One morning, when I was traveling from Chicago to Omaha, I rose from my sleeping berth before the rest of the passengers had risen, and, going along the aisle to wash in the dressing room, encountered two Pullman porters in the corridor. One was polishing the patent leather shoes of the other, and the polishee was standing with his arms outspread, beaming down on the proceedings and chanting with the extremest voluptuousness: "Ah doan care about ma hands—and Ah doan care about ma face—but—Ah—do—like—clean—*shoes!*"

They have, too, moments of imagination by which the traveler benefits. Once, when I was traveling through the Rockies, from Salt Lake City to Pueblo, Colorado, the train halted at the highest point of our journey, and the Negro porter called me to the window and showed me a pool beside the railway track. Just a pool, just such a dark ditchful as one might see by an English railway line. But the darky's eyeballs rolled in his head, his glistening black hands waved impressively, his soft voice dipped and soared, as he laid before me the fact, which indeed thrilled me, that this pool was lying on the Great Divide. The trickle that ran from it at the one end became, in the long last, an arm of the Colorado river which winds away and away for fifteen hundred miles through the strangest country of cliffs cut by water and weather to shapes fine drawn as spires or fantastic as a dinosaur and are like a sunset sky, with splashes of scarlet and purple and emerald earths, till it reaches the warm Pacific. And the trickle that ran from the other end was the Arkansas river that tumbles down the boulders of the Rockies and becomes a slow silver stream that crawls over the green flat plains for a thousand miles and more till it joins the corpulent brown body of the Mississippi, and moves like a vast sliding lake on to the Gulf of Mexico. Here was a prodigious birth and beginning.

I was grateful to the Pullman porter for having the imagination to recognize the quality of that sight, for it was part of the pageant of rivers which to me is one of the most valid reasons why every one ought to visit America before he dies. Till one sees the Hudson river one cannot believe that for three hundred and fifty miles of New York state, as far as from London to Edinburgh—it runs through country as lovely as our Lake district. Hour after hour one travels past wooded mountains falling to quiet waters, as beautiful as the finest moments of Derwentwater or Ullswater. There is the Susquehanna, too, which is as lovely as its Indian name, broad and shining, with forests on each side that mount sugar-loaf hills and crown craggy

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heights. Its tributary, the Julietta, runs through woodland as sweet as our own Exmoor valley. But even better than these is the Connecticut river in its upper reaches, running deep blue under a cloudless winter sky, a tangle of red bramble and amber grasses jewelled with frost on its brink, and the bare silver birches standing by like shapely ghosts. All these woodland rivers have a special beauty in the autumn and the winter that cannot be foreseen by the English imagination, for in autumn the foliage passes through a range of colors that is infinitely more varied than anything ever seen in Europe, and we have no conception of the golden clarity of their winter sunshine. Though the rivers of the Middle West are apt to be as tame as our East Anglian rivers since they run on the flat prairies, they have their character. With the coppices on their banks, and the marshes where the bullrushes grow, they look like the kind of places where small boys love to play; one thinks of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn and their not unworthy descendant, Booth Tarkington's Penrod. And in the Middle West there comes the greatest thrill in all this pageant of rivers. Who could look on the Mississippi without emotions? It is a hero among rivers, a watery Hercules. I first saw it one sunset in Minnesota, where it runs between Minneapolis and St. Paul. At the bottom of a deep trench whose walls were hung with flaming autumn trees, it lay in the shadow, almost tenuous, shining whitely, with shadows ribbed with the velvety bars of sandbanks. One could imagine Red Indians. I saw it again later, a day's journey southward, down on the Iowa and Illinois border. On each bank was a steel-colored rectangular Middle West town; east, west, north and south stretched the sallow prairies. On a grassy island in the river stood a white wooden house, evidently some sort of a public building dating back to the early nineteenth century or so, a beautiful example of the colonial style of architecture, with its classical colonnade and pediment all wrought in wood; like all the houses of that type in this country which was but recently so painfully claimed from savagery, its delicacy had an air of pathos, like a noble lady enduring poverty. Past this flowed a river that had lost its looks, that was nearly featureless, that was just a river, but that had a look of power. I saw it a third time, again a day's journey south, down by St. Louis. Even flatter there than the Middle West, and oozier of earth; on the dark fields stood the withered maize plants, as tall as men, and looking with their limpness and outthrust leaves, like men in attitudes of desperation. At the bottom of a clay cutting ran the Mississippi, mud-yellow, quite featureless now, and to apply a word that until then one would not have thought applicable to a river, shapeless. Just water running between two banks. It is odd that it was there, where the Mississippi is just water, that I realized that I would never be content till I had come back and known this river, and had taken a journey on it by steamer, down between Missouri and Kentucky, between Arkansas and Tennessee, between Louisiana and Mississipi, all the way to the Gulf of Mexico. It is an absurd desire. Probably no such steamers run. But have you never been in love with somebody plain and probably unattainable? It is like that.

Really, it is just like that. America is a continent with which one can have innumerable love-affairs. I am not monogamous myself in my passion for the Mississippi. There are times when I think with as insistent a longing for a place named Bingham, which is in the state of Utah. It is a mining-camp. One drives in one's automobile on noble roads planted with poplars over a green and fertile plain (it was desert till the Mormons irrigated it) to a canyon that drives a wedge into the foothills of the snow-peaked mountains. There is one long winding street of wooden houses, paintless, dilapidated; some with verandas on which men in broad hats sit in rocking chairs, spitting slowly and with an infinity of sagacity; some with plate glass windows, on which the washed-off word "saloon" still shows as a pathetic shadow, which are eating-houses of incredible bareness and dinginess, some others with plate-glass windows that show you men on high chairs with white sheets round them being shaved, and tin cans everywhere. Then at the end of the street one comes on a mountain of copper. Just that, a mountain of copper. Pyramid-shaped it is, and cut into regular terraces all the way from the apex to the base, where lies a pool of water emerald as Irish grass. It sounds the hardest thing in the world, and the terraces have as sharp an edge as a steel knife. Yet it seems a shape just taken for an instant by the ether. One feels as if one were standing in front of a breaking wave of a substance more like cloud-stuff than water, yet like the sea; for the whole hillside is luminously and transparently pale, and reticulated with mineral veins that are blue and green like sea water. I want to see that marvel again, that mountain that is made of metal, that looks as if you could put your hand through it. I want to go back, just as I want to go back to San Francisco, which is a day and a night further west from Bingham. For that is like the Bay of Naples, but it is all done in the delicate pastel shades and the gentle greyness of Edinburgh. Sailing ships lie in the harbor, with their lovely rigging. There is a dead volcano looking over the Bay at the city, whose musical name is Tamalpais; she is shaped like Fujiyama, and I am enough in love to swear she is as beautiful. Round here are daughterly green hills running down to the indenting waters, their slopes blue and white with wild lupins. I love these places.

It is real love. One has been fond of European places, but the affection has been mild and reasonable. I have imagined that I loved Rome and Granada, but there they are, both within two days and two nights of London, for no undue expenditure, and I have visited neither for the last two

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years. But I know that I am capable of getting up and going to have a look at San Francisco at a time when I ought not, though it means five days on the water and five days and five nights on the train, and many pounds and more dollars than I can afford to spend on merely going to have a look at anything.

This is the real unreasonable thing that is called love. And mind you, it is not only one that feels it. I am not telling you about myself; I am telling you about the American people. For this love that their Continent has the power to evoke is one of the most powerful factors in the moulding of their lives. It makes them wanderers. And that is the thing that marks them off from all other modern peoples. They are migrating. They are nomads. It makes their cities enchanting. For each of these marks an occasion when these wanderers have fallen so deeply in love with a place that for a time they abandoned their nomadism. This is a most romantic country.

It is at first hard for the stranger to realize how nomadic the Americans are, because one is apt to draw a false conclusion of stability from the facts that, in the towns at least, they have the best homes in the world, and that their women are incomparably the best housekeepers. But unlike the successful domestic women of other climes, the American housewife is not tethered to the cooking stove. She is astonishingly mobile. Of an evening, after dinner, should she and her husband be alone, the weather will have to be pretty bad before they will settle down before the fire. They are more likely to take the automobile out for a run of a length that would be considered a whole day's expedition in this country. If they live in Salt Lake City they will have a marvellous homecoming. Beautifully did the Mormons build on this perfect site that they found after their thousand mile trek through the desert, a city of broad lawny streets with a Capitol that stands out against the sunset on a ledge on a hill as finely as any building raised by the old Romans; widely stretches the plain that was desert till the Mormons came, that is green and plenteous because of their tillage and irrigation, in the East to the feet of the mountains whose arms are now blue with nightfall, in the West to the great Salt Lake where the last light lies rosy on the peaks of the unvisited islands where buffalo still roam. There is romance for you. You would go out and look at it if it were at your backdoor. Even if you lived on the prairies of Nebraska, that are as flat as the mud at Southend, you would still take that nocturnal ride. For here, as always on the plains, what one loses on the swings one makes up on the roundabouts. What the landscape lacks in interest, the cloudscape supplies. It is good to drive there by night, under bright stars that look as if they were nailed onto the dark roof of some not too elevated tent.

The mobility of the American housewife manifests itself of course in much more startling ways than that. She will up at any moment and start out at a few hours' notice on an automobile trip of several days, up into the mountains or across the desert, and serve her family with a succession of meals that the English mind cannot conceive as being born of the casualness of a picnic. Lovely it is to travel on the Ridge Route from Los Angeles to San Francisco, high among the blue mountains with sharp spiney ridges that lie up against each other like so many vast lizards; or to cross the Nevadan desert and see the mirage change a peak as big as Ben Nevis to an island floating on a lake whose magic waters are drunk at their not-existing shore by horses never to be bridled by tangible riders. These are love affairs with the American continent that are worth having; there are other, more extensive ones, that she has. American summer holidays are longer than ours and run, indeed, to a full three months.

Then the American housewife takes up her house and lifts it any distance up to a thousand or fifteen hundred miles. The Salt Lake City woman will take her family up to the far North West in Oregon. The Nebraskan woman will find a summer home in the woods of Maine, in New England. There is a difference between these transcontinental leaps and our nervous August toddles to Newquay or Aldeburgh. And what is even more remarkable is the way that elderly people will leave the districts where they have lived all their lives and start over again in some strange place that has caught at their imagination. There is a town in southern California, Los Angeles, which is developing an enormous belt of suburbs that rather resemble one of our riverside towns like Maidenhead in their expanses of cheerful houses with flowery gardens. It is populated largely by retired farmers and their families from Iowa, which is in the Middle West. I cannot imagine a fashion springing up among Essex farmers for settling in the south of France or on the Italian Riviera; yet the distance is not more great.

They run up and down their continent, they run across it. They are wooing her beauty, they are seeking the adventures she gives them with both hands. It is in their blood. The history of their country is the history of that chase. Firstly there was the settlement of the East; then the more vigorous stocks pushed out for the Middle West. Then there was a double movement: of the gentler spirits who wanted to found an American culture, back to the East; of the bolder spirits, who wanted to extend the United States, out West. That adventurous spirit spills sometimes outside the cup; up to the gold-mines in the Klondike. It is a strong and beautiful thing, as lovely in its way as the English love of stability and a settled home.

I mean to go back to America again and again. I want to see more of these love-affairs between America and the American people.

REBECCA WEST.

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Blood Money

THE cool half-million pounds exacted by His Britannic Majesty's government from that of the King of Egypt for the assassination of the Sirdar, following the more remote Corfu incident and the tidy little sum which our Department of State obtained from Persia on the occasion of the murder of Consul-General Imbrie at Teheran, revives with refreshing candor the ancient and honorable custom of the wergeld, or, to be crude, "blood-money."

The propriety of this survival from primitive times is beside the point. Morally there is much to be said for and against blood-money. When the Germans imposed it upon certain Belgian municipalities in the occupied territories during the war, we Allies found it a most excellent fodder for our propaganda. Yet the history of even our own lily-white foreign policy—if only in the instance of the Boxer indemnity—admits "blood-money" in practice, as a convenient and comprehensible form of retribution. With the disappearance of its companion practice, that of exacting hostages, whose noses, lips, ears and limbs could be amputated as a sign of diplomatic impatience and whose lives were forfeit to our interpretation of our enemy's intentions, blood-money is the sole relic of our glorious and unregenerate past.

What we must do, if only to vindicate our proud title to efficiency, is to equate our wergeld quotations on the basis of some internationally accepted common denominator. When that is done, the problem of the indemnity will be a mere matter of routine to be checked by public accountants; nations will not find it necessary to go to war for a dead drummer and, best of all, other nations will know the precise extent of their liability in murdering offensive foreign officials or tourists.

The lack of such a scientific rating leads only to confusion and consequent international jealousy. Why, for instance, is a British general twenty-five times as expensive as an American consul? Why is an American who went down with the Lusitania without commercial value in the light of recent negotiations between the German and American governments if he was almost worth going to war for in 1915?

Let us propose for our unit the lowest form of human life. In place of the reader's pet abominations—whether Rotarian, Parlor Radical, Babbitt or International Banker—let us take as our unit the New Hebridian negrito. There may be other humans more degraded. The author has never met them, neither has he met a negrito, but the principle is clear. Let the nations agree that the indemnity for such a unit shall be one dollar. With that as a starting point it will be easy to work up the scale until we strike the delicate levels of officialdom, for which special formulae must be evolved. We shall find the scale running about as follows: Chinese coolies, Egyptian fellaheen, and Asiatic peasants generally, $10.00; Asiatic factory workers, $12.50; European peasants (exclusive of the Balkans), $25.00; European industrial workers, $35.00; European public servants, $21.13; European professional classes, $50.00; and so on. We should progress through the various strata of continental and British society, making appropriate notations for such figures as French counts and British jockeys, until we strike God's Own Country and finally attain the customary $10,000 liability of American railroads and other homicidal agencies of a semi-public nature.

Such a scale would lead to many stimulating contrasts. One might find a Liverpool dock-worker, a Neapolitan barber and a Swiss bell-ringer bracketed with the average American alderman. An Oxford don, a French headwaiter and a Canton tea-merchant might be grouped with such capable persons as Tad Jones or Charlie Chaplin. The reader can amuse himself preparing his own categories.

The objection that such ratings would be so arbitrary as to render an international agreement out of the question is, unfortunately, sound. Would the Imperial Japanese government agree that it takes ten yellow men working in a rice field to equal one white American farmer cranking a Ford? The Imperial Japanese government would undoubtedly become sentimental over the subject of race-equality if so reasonable a contention were made. Would Zinovieff ever admit that three moujiks must be placed end to end in order to atone—even hypothetically—for one Parisian stock-broker? Zinovieff would call out the Third International and the ghost of Lenin rather than yield to so obvious a truism. And would not Costa Rica and Siam contend that one of their generals had a greater value than one-fourth of an Italian organ-grinder?

Yet another manner, and one less contentious, for arriving at a basis for determining blood-money claims would be to rate men at their economic capacity. No arbitrary valuations need be established here. Income tax returns in the countries where income tax is levied give a rough idea of a man's economic value. An international union, similar to the postal union, could arrive at mutually acceptable rates on a gold basis. And in a world of unstable exchanges we could experience the ineffable joy of picking up the morning paper and reading that Bolivian llama-herders had been at a heavy discount all day, that Danish churn-inspectors had advanced three-eighths of a point over yesterday's closing quotations, that American business men had

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been steady on the whole, with occasional soft spots, and that Hindu irrigators had recovered from their recent depression and were the leading feature of an otherwise languid market. How our national pride would rejoice to see American dentists quoted above European cabinet ministers and how bitterly would we inveigh against the bankers who were playing up British novelists against American journalists.

In recapitulation, much of this proposal is utopian; obviously the world is still too anarchical to govern this matter reasonably; yet the necessity for some such regulation is obvious. If small, and as we always call them, "unruly" nations insist on the pleasure of murdering our nationals, and we insist on their paying for their fun, the only fair thing would be for those few nations which are in a position to exact blood-money to serve notice on the world of the precise value attached to particular individuals. In default of a general international instrument, drafted by a sub-committee of the League of Nations, each big power should prepare its own scale of valuations and prepare to enforce them. The value could be noted on each passport—either in cipher, so as not to offend the bearer, or in terms of unblushing cash. Then every consular and customs agent could note for himself the liability which his country was undertaking in issuing the requested visa.

For instance, such a notation might read:

Addison Sims,
Chamber of Commerce Building,
Seattle, Wash.

Liability: R E M Hs Su 20/10; which would mean: Rotarian (1) plus Elk (½) plus Mason (3/2) plus High School (1/10) plus State University (1/5) times $20,000 (annual income), over ten.

The consul would then see, after a few calculations on his cuff, that $6,600 would be the cost of lynching Mr. Sims. By prearrangement with insurance companies, a small sum could be added to the visa fee, sufficient to pay the premium on this man's insurance for that sum for the period of visa validity, and Addison Sims could go wherever he liked. The countries he visited would be secure in the knowlege that Sims had paid for his own indemnity and that the insurance company would make good; the American State Department, on receipt of the news of his assassination by some under-tipped head-waiter in the Tyrol or some Bulgarian comitadji out stalking Hellenes, would fill out the proper forms and applications and then await check and coffin by return mail. No national pride would be fractured and no warfare need ensue.

The same principle should be applied to officials. With them a simple system of multiples could be devised for application to the envoy's original valuation. Diplomats would use "x", "y" would serve consular officers, "a" and "b" would serve for cabinet officers and senators respectively. Minor variants could be used to distinguish different grades, as (x-3) for a simple secretary of legation, and (b-x) for a lame-duck congressman rewarded by a diplomatic post in Central America.

How much franker and fairer it would be when next the Administration seeks to discover whether its choice is persona grata to some luckless little country in South America or the Middle East, if the State Department would inform the government concerned that the valuation placed on the person mentioned for the post is $500,000, a salute to the American flag, capital punishment for the murderers, and the temporary occupation of the principal seaport.

In that event the nation concerned might with perfect propriety explain that so expensive an ambassador was too serious a responsibility, and that they would prefer something cheaper, say something in the neighborhood of $150,000, a military funeral and the rigorous suppression of anti-American propaganda, or what have you?

Should this system be even partially adopted, foreign relations would be put on a freer, healthier and at the same time more business-like footing, and the sales of American goods abroad would be increased fully eight and one-half percent in the next fiscal year. And besides, if we made it cheap enough we might rid ourselves permanently of several political liabilities by "framing" some small and "unruly" nation to shoot every minister we sent there, the indemnity to be subscribed by patriotic American citizens throughout the world.

JOHN F. CARTER.

Midsummer Sanity

Leave me. The water that mumbles and drones in my ears,
To you is a laughter running its golden trebles;
For you the flood of night which confuses my fears
Is only a blue stream washing a skyfull of pebbles.

Our lips meet. But there is no union—not even in dreams.
Deaf to the arrogant pulses, you hear nothing rude;
You hold your hand out to the fire because of the gleams,
Walking the world like a princess at home in her fairy wood.

There will be nothing, not even a trumpet, to shake you;
The walls of your castle will fall to the sigh of a flute.
The prince, in white satin, will always be coming to wake you—
For you there will only be beauty divorced from the brute.

Here, with your round, boyish head on my shoulder, it seems
That glow-worms can really be diamonds and every bright fly is a star.
Leave me—the fruit of my knowledge is less than your dreams.
My mind has been poisoned with truth. Oh, remain as you are.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

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Notes on Modern Literature

I.

WHEN Casanova went to call on Rousseau, they do not seem to have understood each other very well.

> We found him [writes Casanova] a man of simple and modest demeanor, who reasoned with justice but was not otherwise distinguished either by his person or by the quality of his mind. Rousseau did not seem to us what is called a good-natured man and as he was far from having the manners of good society, Mme. d'Urfe did not hesitate to pronounce him vulgar. We saw the woman with whom he was living and of whom we had heard but she scarcely raised her eyes to look at us. On our way home, the singularity of the philosopher enlivened our conversation.

This is all he reports of Rousseau except an anecdote of how the Prince de Conti snubbed him. But when Casanova goes to pay his respects to Voltaire, they get on together famously: Voltaire invites him to spend several days at Geneva and Casanova says he wrote down a record of their conversations almost long enough to fill a volume.

Yet Casanova's own career had much in common with Rousseau's: like Rousseau, he sprang from the people; like him, he had had to live by his wits; like him, he had been a homeless adventurer and an impostor and knave. Yet Voltaire's fragment of autobiography is far more in the vein of Casanova's than Rousseau's Confessions are. In a sense, neither Casanova nor Voltaire takes his experiences very seriously; they are both disposed to regard life as a more or less enjoyable joke. And in doing so they become—in their separate spheres—two great typical figures of the eighteenth century. Neither cared very much for Rousseau—nor, apparently, had much faith in him: they thought him clumsy and dull. Yet they might have recognized in him the face of the future—for almost everything that was coming to Europe Rousseau already represented—sentimentality, equalitarian society and the sickness of romanticism. Casanova, though a victim of the Inquisition, defended the prisons and the nobility; Voltaire, though the champion of liberty, lived in a world which privilege had made possible. But Rousseau, brooding on his ignominies and wrongs, had stored away the emotional power which was to explode the old machine. And his maladjustment to society had bred a new sort of sensibility: the woods and lakes among which he hid had somehow sunk into his emotions and become impregnated with them. In Rousseau's soul the chaos and the travail had already begun, and his autobiography is the record of its sorrows and its exaltations. But Casanova, when he came to retrace his life, remembered nothing but a thousand charming women, a thousand excellent dinners and a thousand amusing scenes. He wrote brightly about them and died and left the future to Rousseau; and the confused and awkwardly-recounted tale of Rosseau's grievances and illness, the interminable unloading of impressions from his overstocked sensibility, is not finished yet.

II.

Arthur Rimbaud was in some ways one of the most impressive figures of the nineteenth century. No one has expressed with more intensity than he the predicament of the human soul under modern civilization. He runs through a rigorous religious training, a passionate revolutionary enthusiasm and an eager study of modern science, to arrive at a deep dissatisfaction with them all. In the bare four hundred pages of his collected works he manages to sound in connection with these things almost all the notes which we recognize as being characteristic of our own time. Une Saison en Enfer is a masterpiece of the western mind at the centre of conflicting forces. And as Rimbaud felt the whole range of these emotions, he invented the language to express them: the individualized sensations of romanticism, which in Rousseau, though elaborate, are still comparatively straightforward, in Rimbaud have become complicated to the last possible degree—at which our poets, without ever having surpassed him, still stand today. It is only in remaining in this situation that they have not followed Rimbaud's example. For Rimbaud escaped from his nineteenth century world, whose institutions and morals oppressed him. In his last work, Une Saison en Enfer, he announces his intention of leaving Europe: "Priests, professors and masters, you do wrong in surrendering me to justice. I have never belonged to these people. . . . I am a beast, a savage. But I may yet be saved. . . . The wisest course is to quit the continent." And he acts upon his decision. After a number of frustrated attempts, he succeeds in establishing himself in Africa. He identifies himself, no longer with poetry, but with one of the really great modern powers, trade; but far away from the bourgeois society which trade has nourished in Europe and in which his brother poets rage and decay. He becomes a trader in ivory and incense and a leader of caravans. He wants his son to become "powerful and rich," an engineer. As for literature, he has announced that he will write no more and he keeps his word. "Je ne pouvais pas continuer," he says of his poetry, "je serais devenu fou et puis, c'était mal"; and when he hears that some of his poems have been published and are being admired in Paris, he flies into a rage. With the civilization of Paris, he has rejected the art to which it gives rise and left the formula he had discovered to Verlaine and Mallarmé and the rest. Too fierce and proud to compromise, he turned his back and escaped from Europe. His brother poets stayed behind and their complaints are our literature.

EDMUND WILSON.

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Main Street in the Theatre

OH, the sweet taste of lemon in the mouth. Oh, dear inferiors, I simply eat you up. Dear Babbitt, you are so almost like me, come and step into view of my crooked mirror. . . . What a narrow escape! But don't go away. Stick around a while, to remind me of what nearly happened to me. Oh, blessed Nearly, Not Quite, Babbitt, good old scout, get into lots of books, climb into lots of plays; stay there, stay there, where I can throw things at you and point a finger at you, and help my neighbor point his finger at you. I scorn you, I spit upon you, I hand you the twelve cylinder raspberry; I misunderstand you, I hate you, because you are so far from what I think I am, and so terribly near what I might have been myself. And I need you."

So the bred-among-Babbitts, and the son-of-a-Babbitt, and the brother and uncle and nephew and employe of ten thousand once-removed and twice-removed and sixteen-times removed but not nearly far enough removed Babbitts and Babbittesses and Babbittinas, who in spite of this Main Street ancestry has emerged from the family woods, or into the Big City, or out upon a little street of his own, and discovers he is Not Like Other Men, Thank God, and finds friends in the same state of mind, and with them forms a Rotary Club, and lunches at noon sharp, or at half-past-Algonquin, and tells screaming stories about his home town, and pours forth quip, crank, satire, irony and wise-crack at the expense of The Babbitt I Left Behind Me, and sings in chorus, with great patriotism, To Hell With Babbitt, And If You Think I Look Like Him, You're Another.

Babbitt—the blah-blah drummer in the Pullman smoker, the glad-handed president of the local suspender corporation, the old gossip on the hotel porch—is to us what the native is to the Englishman, what the peasant was to the Russian. He is the offending and incomprehensible Multitude. He is the dark background and source of folk-lore. But with this obvious difference, that while the Native and the Peasant are alien, far away, and to be written about as one writes about curious domestic animals, Mr. Babbitt is one of us, or pretty nearly so, and while he can be and usually is written about with equal misunderstanding, he is not written about with equal detachment. He flows in our blood, and we feel the poison coursing through our veins; he stops us on the corner, and we are ashamed of our brother; he tells us his troubles, and we swear inwardly never to share our own; he passes on a good story, and we vow never again to Say-have-you-heard-this-one as long as we live; but we are sometimes ashamed of ourselves, and we have been known to dump our troubles on a friendly ear and we have retailed flat anecdotes, and so, after all, he is our brother, and oh how much the more we hate him for the closeness of that tie. We hate him, we take notes as we listen to him, we fry him in absence; into nearly everything we write about him (a great deal is being written too nowadays about him and his long, small street with the low rents and the tin garages) creeps something of that hatred, something of that gleeful sizzle as we hold him over the fire to fry.

He and his kind are the Modern Villain. In intellectual circles, the paste-diamond crook, the scheming financier, the corrupt mayor and rich hard-guys generally have been succeeded by our annoyingly harmless friend in the smoker.

In the silence of a book, enthusiastic hisses do not rise from its reader to applaud the author's portrait of his villain. When Main Street and its hairpin-calibre villains bleat upon us (in a deep armchair) from a book they are quite as likely to be simply boring as to live before us vividly as small town types. In a play, where villains always have a better chance, they too are likely to appear to better advantage. Their dulness can be made to bite as well as bark, their villainy, small-talk, selfishness, back-biting, and private aquarium poor-fishiness can come near raising in an audience that beginning of hatred which may end in a good old-fashioned hiss. When Main Street comes before us in three acts, it is easier to identify ourselves with the outcast, the non-Babbitt, and thoroughly to hate the local population. (This is always good fun. Try it on your victrola—but everybody has.) And so a play which is really a bore can manage to entertain us as a hatefest, particularly when the objects of hate are sufficiently, but not too recognizably, like ourselves.

There have been a number of plays within the last few years thrown up by the satiric fascination Main Street has for the intellectuals. Some—usually the best—have only skirted the theme, or borrowed the setting, or picked off here and there an individual, fantastically, perhaps, or good humoredly, or with an eye more to the situation than to the dreary street along which it unfolds. But there have been others, out of notebook by malice, written in the spirit of an ardent entomologist who hated insects. As a very near cousin of these same insects I wish to protest, not because great numbers of them ought not to be stepped on, but because the roach-powder impulse, when translated into the theatre, becomes far more an expression of personal dislike than a play about human life.

Roughly speaking, books or plays about modern American life can be divided into those with an insect view and those with a human view. Your author with a human view exhibits his fellow beings for what they are, mixtures of good and evil, and lets the quality of that mixture strike you, as audience, according to your tastes in human character and its good and evil, without letting on that of his characters he despises one and admires another, without urging you to believe in and share his admiration or contempt. He has no morality, no preference of his own, to put over on you. Preference in human beings so strong as to verge on propaganda stamps its author as a moralist, who wishes his pictures of character to be agreed with rather than to interest or entertain. Your insectarian, on the other hand, at bottom is asking for agreement; he wants you to mark his characters on the same scale as his own, and if he has not managed to make obvious to you which persons in his play or book are insects, and to be given E in the scale of preferences, which others are valuable, or not boring, or kind-hearted, or otherwise redeemable, he has failed. "Come with me to the ant-hill," he calls out; "I have found out which ants are black and which are white, which ants sting, crawl, forge, lie, gabble, and beat their wives, and which are worth saving before I stamp on their hill; you must repeat after me their qualities or disqualities—a very easy lesson really, because I had them all tagged beforehand."

One of the most striking examples of an expedition, fully equipped with tags, preferences, and self-conscious superiority, to the Main Street ant-hill, is Close Harmony, a play by Dorothy Parker and Elmer Rice (at the Gaiety Theatre). Mr. Rice, in a play all his own, The Adding Machine, some time ago gave us a very interesting and original exploration of Main Street, piercing beyond its bromides and spiritual minimum-wage scale into the very

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minds and hearts of some of its inhabitants. The tags were few, and not easily legible; the inner struggle and tragedy of one man was the thing, made memorable as a character by Dudley Digges's fine performance. The externals were formalized by devices we were taught to call expressionism; they were depersonalized, mechanized, which made the contrast between his surroundings and the intensely personal struggle within the man himself vivid, at times truly touching. The collaborators of Close Harmony set out to do, and accomplished, something quite different, but with a little of the same theme: a small man caught in his surroundings, a pathetic fly whose plight is all the more hopeless because the web in which he is caught is really so much feebler and poorer than himself. He is a commuter, he owns his own home, he has held the same job for years, he is content, to outward view; he has a nagging wife, a silly little daughter; an impossible sister-in-law invades his home. Next door lives a charming lady, formerly on the stage. Her husband treats her like dirt. The commuter nearly runs away with her. Not quite. He cannot quite shake off the heavy load of his own house and family. A neat situation, and quite a sympathetic character, which Mr. Spottswood acts with unusually restrained warmth and skill. But he cannot redeem the play to his own human flavor. For the flavor of the play as a whole is far from warm, sympathetic, human. What dominates it is Main Street, the nagging, the flatness, the stale tit-for-tat, the cheap furniture, the small talk, the pilloried bromides. Now all this disagreeable human scenery exists, and of this very dingy and raw material can be made plays photographic, satirical, humorous, destructive or kindly. These approaches can be used with a "purpose" in the back of the author's head, or with none. Close harmony is excruciatingly full of the fingerprints of "purpose." At its worst, this seems to be a malevolent intention on the part of authors who once were terribly bored and irritated to get back at the people who so bored and irritated them. The first act, with its sweetly-nagging mother and her impossible sister, seems an essay in revenge. There is no character drawing, no lightness, no humor, no originality, nothing created in those deadly trip-hammer sallies, nothing apparently, save a repetition of the cry: "Listen to what this damned fool insect says. She bit me! I'll fix her."

And the audience ate it up. They recognized, not the character, but the nagging, not the people, but the stifling petty boredom; they too had been bored and nagged at, and it was fun to see the nagging insect spread out on the stage with a great big pin through it. They found the dialogue screamingly true to life, whereas it was only boringly true to scratches life had given them. They thought the unbearable mother real, but when people bore us unspeakably the only real thing about them is the fact that they are boring us. They revelled in the cross-patter of stale bromides, bromides so stale, so large, so legible at a thousand yards that they seemed to have been nursed to elephantine size in some Burbank hothouse of the mind. They opened their mouths eagerly for a slice of life, and, prepared by long experience with life's indigestibility, swallowed a slice of cold, sour lemon pie.

Our Jungle is the happy-hunting ground of novelists and playwrights, who keep coming out of it with a gun over their shoulder and showing us small game, stiff, dead, hamstrung and fish-eyed. Have another slice of life? Cold rump of commuter? Sister-in-law's knuckles? Sirloin from the upstate wife? Our Main Street is the happy-hunting ground of the ill-willed camera. Picture ahead, Kodak as you go.

How many more pictures of this kind are there ahead of us? Are we in for several years of stuffed and mounted Babbitt, shrieking his tame wise-cracks and fetid bromides at every turn of the crank? Will the refugees from Main Street continue to endure cardboard jumping-jack caricatures of their former fellow citizens, human only in being detestable? Are we going on confusing satire with the ducking-board?

Yet Main Street exists, and exchanges platitudes, and breeds gossip, and talks about automobiles, and snaps at itself, and spawns salesmen, and speaks at the Rotary club, and fills half an old boiler with geraniums on the front lawn, and reads and writes our newspapers, and sees and makes our movies, and washes about the anxious shores of the little islands of cultivation we think we live on, a vast busy, mediocre ocean of life entirely careless of these islands. What are we to do with Main Street? Get away from it? Say we hate it? Share our hatred with kindred souls? Celebrate our narrow escape from it in books and plays that hang effigies of its citizens by the neck until dead, and then some? Roll its silly imperfections into types and put fabricated dialogue into their mouths? Shoot at it, stick pins into it at every opportunity, over and over again, until the ocean of peanut-hearted insects becomes ashamed, and dries up, and we are all one glorious dry island of cultivation?

Socially, perhaps, that is the only way. But artistically, Main Street is not It, it is They. Millions of human beings, all different. Hundreds of types, if you have the kind of eye that synthetizes live bipeds into types, but millions of characters. Types, lifeless progeny of the too-generalizing mind—how can they compare with characters on the stage? Yet while the stage is overcrowded with types, the woods are full of characters crying aloud to be put upon the stage. By focussing thousands into types we get farther from the American scene; by picking out characters we approach nearer and nearer to the heart of it. Plays like Close Harmony are going down a blind alley; there cannot be many more like them. On the other hand, plays like What Price Glory and The Showoff, which, each with its own kind of excellence, create characters, show how rich is the land for whoever will explore it character for character.

Exploration—but it must be without hatred if it is to ring true, without the taint of moral judgment, of superiority, of annoyance, of revenge. Irritation is the blind veil that falls before the eyes that would understand. Page Mr. Anton P. Chehov, who could draw marvelous portraits of the smallest and most ordinarily despicable people without sign of annoyance, if indeed he ever felt any. Page Mr. Ring Lardner, who is the best portraitist of Main Street because he is also the most irresponsible, good-natured and understanding.

Every playwright who is about to tackle Main Street, and who perhaps has it too much on his mind to expose a collection of feebly-impaled specimens of third-rate existence for us to snicker at, ought to be made to read The Golden Honeymoon, and learn from Ring Lardner's story, which is closer than any other to the heart of Main Street and America, the difference between understanding people and merely laughing at them.

For Ring Lardner, worse luck, doesn't write plays.

ROBERT LITTELL.

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CORRESPONDENCE

The Beast in a New Form

SIR: Your readers may care to know that after the hardest battle I have ever had, even in the days of the Beast and the Jungle, when both political machines were against me because of the part I took in the exposure of the crimes of privilege, I have won out for the tenth time in twenty-five years. The particularly bitter character of the contest I have just passed through was due in large measure to the fact that I chose openly and actively to oppose the Ku Klux Klan, which became an active political factor in this state during the present year.

The Klan celebrated its first victory in August, with the election of a Klan mayor, whose recall had been attempted. I took part in that fight because I felt it was the beginning of Klan domination in this city and state. My further reason for taking an active part in it was what many of us considered a base betrayal of the city by the mayor's city attorney, who refused to except to a valuation of $20,000,000 placed on the city's railroad property when the city's representative, Mr. Delos F. Wilcox, had shown that it was not worth over $10,000,000. The failure of the mayor's city attorney to except to the valuation bound the city to it. It probably means an increase in fares in order to pay the dividend on excessive valuation made up largely of water. Thus, at the outset, I antagonized a powerful city hall machine and the most active of all of our utility corporations in local politics. . . .

The Ku Klux Klan has swept Denver like a prairie fire. It is said that this is the way of the Klan when it is first introduced into some localities and we certainly got our fill of it. It was like the stampede of the herd in full tilt and it seemed almost as useless to try to stem its mad head-on rush. There was no rhyme or reason in it. I was the only candidate for any office who bucked this rush by appearing at anti-Klan meetings. At some of these meetings the lights were put out or there were noisy demonstrations, cat calls, hisses, boisterous and idiotic laughter and every form of insult that could be devised to interfere with the right of free speech. The conduct of the women at one or two of these meetings cannot be likened to anything but that of women before the Tribunal at the French Revolution, demanding the blood of their victims.

In the twenty-five years I have been on the bench, I have had the honor, with the help of our people, to write and place on the statute books some fifty-two items of law for the protection of women and children. Among these laws is that changing the domicile and jurisdiction of non-support and desertion cases to the residence of the wife and child instead of that of the husband and father, the mothers' compensation law under which I have managed to keep some 5,000 children in their own homes, and the maternity law that has already saved hundreds of unborn children from the abortionists, and the mothers from these butchers. All of this service for women hadn't the slightest effect in stemming the fury of Klan women who appeared at some of these meetings.

I recall one woman who was screaming in my face and thus addressing me, "You cur, you dirty cur, you dirty cur!" I encountered this woman outside of a hall and I said, "Madam, why do you call me a dirty cur?" having in mind all that I had done and helped to do for women. She screamed in my face, "You are not one hundred percent American, you are not one hundred percent American, you are against the Klan." It was utterly useless to reason with such people. They had simply gone stark mad over the Klan. They had paid $10 a head to hate somebody and they were getting their money's worth. Although I am a Methodist and a 32d degree Mason, I was accused of being a Jesuit and in league with Rome to overthrow the republic all because I would not keep silent about the Klan. . . . In no campaign have I ever seen such stark madness, such bitterness, such hatred. It was mostly working people to whose interest I have devoted so much of my life and whose children have profited most by our legislation, who became the victims and dupes of the Klan.

Of course they did not know what they were doing. They are the ready victims of that inferiority complex which gives them the feeling of exaltation with its accompanying delusions of grandeur when they read the Klan literature and are called "men of the most sublime lineage the world has ever seen,"—the only Simon pure one hundred percent Americans. They went into the Klan by the thousands and furnished the strength that enabled the charlatans to capitalize their ignorance into money and political offices. They were able to capture the Republican name and organization at the primaries with a few exceptions.

Running on the Democratic ticket, I was compelled to buck the Coolidge landslide, which overwhelmed us with 125,000 majority, the City Hall machine, the utility corporations, the Ku Klux Klan with its 40,000 voters in this city, all sworn to their own ticket and the poison-squad of evil-minded women . . . as well as the accumulation of enemies of twenty-five years and two newspapers hammering me, morning and evening—the News and Times. We feel it is a great victory, and, having received a clear majority, it is a clean cut victory over the Klan whose monstrous un-Americanism I have no apology for opposing in the past, as I always will in the future.

BEN B. LINDSEY.

Denver, Col.

A Spelling List for Letter Writers

SIR: This curriculum-making business appears to be still in its infancy and liable to the mistakes of infancy.

A list of words used in letter-writing ought to face first of all the question whether you care for the words used by most people or for the words that a man who uses them uses oftenest. For instance, personal letters normally include frequent mention of the health of family and friends, sometimes even of others; therefore I should assume that the majority of letter-writers will in the course of their lives have to write "pneumonia," but few except doctors and nurses will have to write it often. On the other hand, most people can write letters all their lives and never have to write "jail"; but if the word does get into a man's letter-writing it is likely to get in over and over. So far as I know, the compilers of lists have never discussed the question which of these types of frequency should be given greater weight, but have plumped for the word that came the greatest number of times in a collection of letters without inquiring whether it was grouped in a few people's letters or not.

Not that I care much. To train a child to spell all the words that he is likely to need would take more time than anybody today would think of giving to the subject. If it were done, as soon as the child was out of school somebody would introduce new words like "chauffeur," "antenna," "hooch," which he would need to be able to spell without having been taught them. What the school can do is to give him the habit of noticing the spelling when he reads a word, and writing it as he saw it; and the extant lists are probably good enough for this.

STEVEN T. BYINGTON.

Ballard Vale, Mass.

Canadian Railways

SIR: Mr. Keenleyside, in your November 19 issue, observes that the Canadian National Railways, while showing a profit over operating cost, are not yet earning more than half their fixed charges of approximately $64,000,000, "due entirely to the mismanagement and extravagance of private ownership."

This mismanagement and extravagance has not burdened the roads with fixed charges in excess of 4 percent on an investment, by Mr. Keenleyside's statement, of $1,620,000. (Presumably all these charges were incurred by the Grand Trunk & Canadian Northern systems, but these comprise 5-6 of the entire mileage.)

In a comparison with private ownership it should be borne in mind that capital could not be secured for this investment without a return of $80,000,000 to $96,000,000. Until the Canadian National Railways returns that sum in profits, in rate reductions, or in some other forms, they cannot be called successful by the standards of private operation.

It is probable that under Sir Henry Thornton's management they will reach this point as soon as the country has caught up with the speculative enterprise of the builders. But management by an able and experienced railroad man "guaranteed a free hand" is not what is usually meant by or expected of government ownership.

WILLARD HELBURN.

Salem, Mass.

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Rebels

The Boy in the Bush, by D. H. Lawrence and M. L. Skinner. New York: Thomas Seltzer. $2.50.

Humpty Dumpty, by Ben Hecht. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.00.

MR. LAWRENCE has grafted the familiar story which he has made his own on to stronger stock in the Australia of the eighties. It may be surmised that his collaborator has supplied the intimate knowledge of social conditions in the colony half a century after its settlement, the extraordinary confusion of a population sprung from the mixed blood of soldiers, laborers, adventurers, convicts, and natives. And let it be said at once that as a story of colonial life The Boy in the Bush ranks high. Among Australian novels, so far as I know, only The Fortunes of Richard Mahoney, by Henry Handel Richardson, approaches it; and as a study of pioneer life it is to be compared with Olive Schreiner's The Story of an African Farm, for South Africa, with W. H. Hudson's Far Away and Long Ago, for the Argentine, with Miss Cather's My Antonia for our Middle West, and the work of Frank and Kathleen Norris for California. Undoubtedly Australia colored by Mr. Lawrence provides a more impressive physical background than any of these, with its desert, its bush, its wide flung farms, its ugly little cities set in the sand, burned by tropic heat and sluiced by tropic rain; and a more amazing social setting, the old vessels of society broken into shards and painfully stuck together again with a grim English determination to ignore the visible cracks. In this primitive world, women count for less, according to Mr. Lawrence's reckoning, than in an older civilization. The fundamental economic and social importance of the woman pioneer can be taken for granted, and though he finds a Monica Ellis, and, in his last chapter, almost by accident, a Hilda Blessington to match Ursula Brangwen, he is able to concentrate attention on his hero. Jack Grant is Paul Morel of Sons and Lovers, and Will Brangwen of The Rainbow, seasoned by Australian life into the indomitable Nietzschean male, ready to crash through the walls of a jerry-built society to get what he wants, as his stallion breaks his stable to seek his mare. All Jack's adventures, his breaking of horses, his fighting with kangaroos and with men, his wandering and toil, his slaying and his solitary flight in the waterless desert, his mastery of the world by gold—all lead to this. But the adventure is grandiose. Jack looms large as the giants of his forebear's killing, in the vast landscape which he needs, in which the rest of the human race with their fears and scruples and repressions are but pigmies.

If Mr. Lawrence's typical hero is the result of his own major frustration, in Jack Grant he has achieved a major compensation. And his triumph is presented with his old eloquence, won back after much feeble and slovenly writing. Jack's religion is taught him by the old matriarch of his tribe. "Trust yourself, Jack Grant. *Earn a good opinion of yourself,* and never mind other folks. You've only got to live once. You know when your spirit glows—trust that. That's *you!* That's the Spirit of God in you . . . God is y'rself. Or put it the other way if you like: y'rself is God." And Jack worships his Jehovah in the spirit of the patriarchs.

> A little world of my own, in the North-West. And my children growing up like a new race on the face of the earth, with a new creed of courage and sensual pride, and the black wonder of the halls of death ahead, and the call to be lords of death, on earth. With my Lord, as dark as death and splendid with lustrous doom, a sort of spontaneous royalty, for the God of my little world. The spontaneous royalty of the dark Overlord, giving me earth-royalty, like Abraham or Saul, that can't be quenched and that moves on to perfection in death. One's last and perfect lordliness in the halls of death, when slaves have sunk as carrion, and only the serene in pride are left to judge the unborn.
>
> A little world of my own! As if I could make it with the people that are on earth to-day! No, no, I can do nothing but stand alone. And then, when I die, I shall not drop like carrion on the earth's earth. I shall be a lord of death, and sway the destinies of the life to come.

In Humpty Dumpty also the hero is already somewhat familiar to us. Kent Savaron is Erik Dorn grown older, his brightness faded, the gay cynicism with which he was wont to survey the human scene turned to bitter hate and his defiance ending in despair and defeat. Instead of the broad new land of Australia for a background, he has a society already formed and fixed, the Chicago of to-day; and this peopled world is too mighty for him. The Winkelbergs in Mr. Hecht's novel are like the Ellises and Georges of Mr. Lawrence's, except that in their grim persistence they triumph. Kent Savaron as he emerges upon his narrower stage is like Jack Grant, but his sensuality contributes not to his victory but to his betrayal. To Mr. Hecht, as to Mr. Lawrence, women are the object and the symbol of victory. In the primitive world of Australia, Stella Winkelberg would have been the slave of her lord, but with pressure of a compact society and a family behind her she slowly masters Savaron. He loses his assertion, doubts himself, wavers, retreats, falls. His personality crumbles into fragments.

> God, how sad he was! He was too deep for himself. There were too many masks, too many closets. He could only stumble around, diverting himself with new attitudes. He was like a room full of strangers continually borrowing his voice and his phrases and dressing themselves up in his soul. That was his biography—a procession of mountebanks. Creatures who made love, who wept with remorse, who went whoring after women, who stood laughing bitterly at the night. Idiots scampering across the stage of his brain, demanding his applause. Demanding he admire them all—as if he were someone else—an audience in the dark. One who looked on. It was this one who was talking now. But how could he know. Could he even trust the despair in his heart now? Perhaps he was still on the stage, gesturing poignantly behind the footlights for the audience in the dark. Still asking applause. Or was this he who laughed, the real one? What a muddle!

Mr. Hecht's world is dark compared to Mr. Lawrence's, without a gleam of beauty or light. His drama is merely domestic friction—the grinding of Savaron's personality in the family mill of the Winkelbergs. His characters are phases of his hatred of the sordid and filthy parasites who crawl upon the dungheap—a hatred of which the hero is an expression more sustained and more concentrated. Kent Savaron stands out with a certain dignity in his refusal to

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crawl. But he pays the severest penalty of rebellion. He becomes obsessed by his own attitude and his mind turns ceaselessly about his protest. He becomes a satire upon himself of which we grow as weary as he does. Mr. Hecht's rhetoric cannot make Savaron a Byron or a Leopardi or anything but a sort of Sanin manqué.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

What Science Warrants

Contributions of Science to Religion, by Shailer Mathews, with the coöperation of William E. Ritter, Robert A. Millikan, Edwin B. Frost, Edward B. Mathews, C. Judson Herrick, John M. Coulter, Ellsworth Faris, Charles H. Judd, John M. Dodson, Charles B. Davenport, E. Davenport, C-E. A. Winslow, and Horatio Hackett Newman. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $3.00.

WHERE religion is involved the disposition of the scientists is to avoid the issue. When they can avoid it no longer, they make their escape by acknowledging its full validity, in its own field. Whether it has any field left is, fortunately, none of their business. The point is, they have all they can comfortably use, all, indeed, they will ever need for any possible expansion, to wit, the entire cosmos as far as it is perceptible and intelligible to man. Whatever lies beyond is the province of religion. Furthermore, being pretty firmly established in the possession of this field, the scientists are inclined to assume a conciliatory mien toward the "natives" whose lands they have so recently appropriated. Their attitude toward poachers and trespassers is benevolently temperate. Why should it be otherwise? Science has nothing to gain and everything to lose by controversy. Therefore peaceful penetration and the disavowal of hostile purpose is the universal rule.

The scientists whose papers comprise more than two thirds of Dr. Mathews's volume have doubtless not been asked to pass on questions of theology. Their contributions are simple, expository statements of what science is, what it has been able to accomplish, and what its present boundaries are. The physicist tells about the structure of the atom, the geologist about the structure of the earth, the astronomer about the structure of the cosmos, and so on.

But whatever the division of labor in a joint undertaking of this kind no contributor can do his work in complete unconsciousness of the common purpose. By mutual understanding the theological interpretation of science is left to the theologian. But each expository essay supplies material for that interpretation. Each writer knows that his picture, whether of plant life or of sanitation, is to be hung in the theological gallery. The degree to which his science is calmly impervious to its surroundings is significant, and any occasional acknowledgment of relationship to the title of the book ought to be especially illuminating.

It is. Let us call the roll. The opening essay, on the Method of Science, is distinctly self-conscious. The author is at particular pains to note, as against the preacher's suggestion that divine guidance to "all truth" means only "sacred" truth, that guidance to truth is guidance to science. He quotes scripture to the glory of them that love truth. He is quite explicit upon the unity of truth. There is no phenomenon beyond the reach of science. Nevertheless, "seeing God in the universe is no more difficult than seeing electrons there." The assurance is interesting and instructive. But we must pass on. The physicist allows himself one sentence of theology. Does transmutation of atoms go on in nature? "Perhaps in God's laboratory, the stars." The astronomer, however, makes no mention even of divine research. The geologist assures the reader simply and without argument that "geology does not lead to irreligion. Many, if not most, of the leading geologists have been truly religious." Without being compromised. The neurologist is silent. So also are the botanist and zoölogist. The latter, though, allows himself to remark of evolution that so valuable an idea is "not lightly to be cast aside in case it fails to agree with one's prejudices." The sociologist makes only the reservation that an adequate social science waits not only upon human wits but "on the inscrutable movements of the cosmic procession whose outcome, being inaccessible to our knowledge, remains the goal of our faith." The psychologist avoids the issue. The physician asks if medical science should disturb religious faith, and answers, "Not at all." "The first origins of matter, of force and of life, seem as remote as ever from finding explanation in any laws or principles now known to us." Eugenics proceeds without divine coöperation. But agriculture claims partnership. "Next to religion and his own destiny, agriculture is man's greatest coöperative enterprise with nature." And further, whoever thinks of science "can but render thanks to Almighty God for His revelation of the laws of nature." Sanitation, however, omits grace.

This concludes the list. All that this group of scientists have cared to say in acknowledgment of their contributions to religion is included in these quotations. It is an impressive showing. Impressively meagre.

What science "contributes" to religion remains to be stated—by the theologian. In his brief introduction to the volume Dr. Mathews announces as the leading question whether religion has any claim to our confidence "in any degree comparable with the claims, let us say, of agriculture and preventive medicine." But obviously, in the author's mind, it has; otherwise the book would not have been written. The question is, what sort of religion? The history of religions indicates that it must be one that fits the present order of civilization. That order is ready to dispense with the whole panorama of "anthropopathic" divinity. But there remains—personality. God is the personality of the cosmos. Not an active personality; "one hesitates to speak easily of His will in the details of life." The object of worship in this view is simply the concept of infinite personality.

This, says Dr. Mathews, is the gift of science. Though of course he does not attempt to derive this notion from any scientific source, he alleges such a source. "Science," he says, "is giving new content to the conception of God," new "thought-patterns," and the like. But what science is actually doing is defining the limits within which theologians may think. Like other contemporary apologists this author is at great pains to point out that science falls short of omniscience. The electron theory has broken down dogmatic materialism. The recalculation of spiral nebulae has opened up the cosmos. Somewhere an acre may remain for the theologian. But it is hard to find. When Dr. Mathews lays claim to human personality he encounters opposition in his own camp. The human being is not a machine, says he. "A machine is not capable of knowing that it is any particular sort of machine." But C. Judson Herrick, neurologist, deposes differently. "The living body is clearly a machine." Furthermore, "some of the

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functions of the cerebral cortex have the unique property that they are aware while they act." In short, the moment the concept of personality is taken to mean anything in particular it comes under the jurisdiction of science. The cosmic personality theory of religion is simply the orthodox-Hebraic European monotheism completely emasculated of all concrete meaning. "Its goal," says Dr. Mathews in his final, pathetic paragraph, "is not an explanation of the universe, but a life with that reason and purpose and personality which science increasingly warrants it in assuming in the universe," whatever "reason and purpose and personality" may mean as applied to the universe.

What science warrants is, apparently, a religion without intelligible meaning. Or are these "thought-patterns" symbols of science, pure and undefiled? "The love of a God of cosmic law," we are told, "is immeasurably grand." But why interpolate the "God"? Perhaps the contribution of science to religion is, simply, the superiority of science. Perhaps the scientist is the more honest theologian. The quotation of the opening essayist is a telling one: "They who know the truth are not equal to them that love it."

C. E. AYRES.

Talks With a Wise Sparrow

Conversations In Ebury Street, by George Moore. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50.

THE young writers of France have heard of George Moore; some of them say that they have met him. When you talk with them about English authors they will mention Moore. They will tell you this and that thing about him, describe his French or relate an incident of one of his visits to Paris. Their descriptions are friendly, and yet there is conveyed in them something which makes Moore seem slightly ludicrous. It is done with their best neatness. There is also a photograph of Moore which I have seen somewhere and there is something slightly ludicrous about that, too—I remember that he appeared as a sort of benign walrus, or a smooth, capon-lined butler. Then, further, there are the Confessions and the Memoirs and all the rest of that sort of writing which he has done and which go to increase the admixture of the ludicrous. Indeed these latter go so far on that path that I would even be willing to entertain a theory that Moore perceives his own ludicrousness and that he has made a conscious picture of it, a sort of Boswellian portrait of himself in the act of being silly for the sake of amusement and ideas, and for heavy men to be angry about and to use as a target for irritated words.

I have not mentioned impressions of the ridiculous in Moore for the purpose of writing him down, although my first paragraph, if only I could have written it perfectly, would have been an example of his own method. There is to be set against those impressions, the man who has created fine novels, well-nerved with thought, and the man who writes even his foolishness with a beautifully controlled technique. The point is that both these men show themselves mingled in the Conversations in Ebury Street. Here, in the midst of intelligent ideas, excellently put, there still hangs a strong flavor of the Aubusson carpet and the pet boa constrictor. This is personal writing, and in that genre Moore never quite leaves behind the naughty boy from Paris. Perhaps that is what enrages the heavy men who do not wish to remember that Moore is one who knows, better than most, the trade of writing prose and who can create masterful portraits of his contemporaries. The five that he does here are remarkably fine; the scene in the jury of the New English Art Club is delightful; and the jilting of Sickert is light tragedy, exactly and precisely handled.

Moore most often begins his thought inauspiciously, in an atmosphere of bright smartness, where the ridiculous Moore gets in the way of Moore the thinking artist and gives an effect of sparrow, of pert and precious fellow. The gentle and lengthy toasting of Mr. Joseph Husband from Winnetka, Illinois, which begins the book, is an excellent example of an obtrusion of the sparrowy nature. Then there is the attack on Hardy, which is put forth in such a way that it is sure to be taken by many, even more than would be necessary, as a piece of rascally, useless impudence. Even the expected and thoroughly fine thought on Balzac is made a little precious by the inclusion of a lecture written in Ebury Street French.

The book, however, makes no pretense to be an exposition of a rounded aesthetic, it is conversation taking place in Moore's house, between Moore and others, or within himself. Conversation is not reasonable; it is a flow of half-reason, of prejudice, and of stimulating spurts of intelligence; and the book has that conversational tempo and form. The thoughts are not rounded, nor defended; but they are not fruitless, random arrows hurled into the infinite. They often linger in the air and drop gently and insinuatingly onto their object, long after the book is closed. If you consider Hardy a giant and Moore an impudent boy you may close your mind to the suggestive value of an attack which leads on to thoughts of the literary craftsman's relation and duty to his craft, or, having tried to close your mind you may still find the arrows drifting closer and closer to the target.

Imagine Moore stretching himself out on the sofa in his drawing room so that he might think more clearly. He lies there a while listening to the ticking of his "pretty Louis seize clock." Then he arises to take a pen and write with clear precision that Beaudelaire was a trashy sort of Rue de Rivoli aesthete. It is sure that Baudelaire had a childish view of himself as a sin-bedizened Satan; he saw himself as the Don Juan of his own sonnet; but he was also a poet. And it is Moore who arises from his couch to tilt at Beaudelaire, Moore who has himself tinged his own excellencies with the tones of a futile brashness. I assure you, it is exceedingly amusing to listen to this wise sparrow at his talk.

H. PHELPS PUTNAM.

Heliotherapy

Sunlight and Health, by C. W. Saleeby. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.00.

SUNLIGHT has been known to be bactericidal since the days of Pasteur. Its efficacy in non-bacterial diseases such as rickets, demonstrated by Hess and others at Columbia University, reveals biochemical possibilities of unsuspected magnitude. Dr. Saleeby has made a careful study of the various institutions which have incorporated heliotherapy into their credo, particularly those dealing with the cure of tuberculosis. He describes in glowing terms the work of Dr. Rollier at Leysin, Switzerland. Here the

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knife has been banished and tuberculous patients are cured by gradual and increasing exposure to the light of the sun. Rollier's explanation is that the violet and ultra violet rays of the sun are the most valuable and he offers as proof of the fact that those patients whose skin develops a bronze pigment shortly after exposure derive the greatest benefit from the treatment. It is true that pigmentation of the skin is a response to the violet and the ultra violet rays but if the general body response depended on these alone the treatment would be most valuable at very high altitudes since these rays tend to diminish as they descend to earth. In England and France, however, spectacular results have been obtained at sea level and these have been ascribed to sea bathing in sunlight by certain investigators. Indeed there are as many explanations as there are institutions. On one point all investigators have agreed: that it is the sun's light and not the sun's heat that is curative. The results of rash exposure to the sun's heat in a mistaken eagerness to hasten the cure have been drastic. Saleeby reiterates the warning against haste and against unintelligent exploitation of the idea. "Hasten Slowly" is the slogan. In La Cure de Soleil, Rollier gives full detail of the treatment, This has been translated into English with the title Heliotherapy.

Although the greater part of Dr. Saleeby's book is devoted to the use of sunlight in pathological cases, his first interest is in hygiene. One need only read his dismal description of smoke befogged London to understand his zeal. However, we, accustomed to turn the other cheek to our European visitors, may be a bit abashed by his enthusiasm for American progress. If his adjectives embarrass us the facts themselves cannot but be gratifying. Our "blue sky" laws have made our cities, with the exception of a few like Chicago and Pittsburgh, smokeless. Our mortality from tuberculosis has been cut down one-half in the period 1905-1919 according to a statement by Dr. Royal Copeland.

Milk is at once an excellent food for mankind and for microörganisms. It can therefore lead either to health or to disease depending upon its bacterial content. The sanitary regulations of New York are such that of an examination of twenty-eight milks fed to mothers attending Infant Welfare Centres in London, only one would have been permitted to be sold in New York. We still have our sunless tenements and our undernourished children: this statistical response to sanitary regulations should be an encouraging stimulus to further improvement. Dr. Saleeby's pictures of schools in the sunshine, sunlight dairies, and a Canadian fox-farm governed by sweetness and light stress the desirability of continuing until all possibilities of improvement have become realized.

LILLIAN SEGAL KOPELOFF.

Mark Rutherford in Old Age

Letters to Three Friends, by William Hale White ("Mark Rutherford.") New York: Oxford University Press. $3.50.

The Groombridge Diary, by Dorothy V. White. New York: Oxford University Press. $4.20.

BOOKS so intimate and personal as these concerning a writer so recently dead can hardly be discussed without some feeling of embarrassment and constraint. It is as if one had been prying into the family relations of some not particularly close acquaintance. This correspondence and diary must chiefly interest the friends of Hale White or those who are very enthusiastic about his work; their appeal is personal. Were it not that we learn from these pages that reviewers are the "merest hacks," whose opinions are not of the slightest importance, and therefore may be freely offered, it would be more comfortable to put off this article for twenty years or so. Emboldened by the author's contempt, the mere reviewer may attempt to hack through the volumes now.

Hale White was an English puritan at heart. It is true that he early broke away from the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion, but he retained the heretical spirit. His scale of values was almost entirely "moral"; the beauty he admitted was really a moral beauty. However much he might rebel against "sects and creeds," Christianity was immensely important to him, the Bible (which he read continually) something more than a collection of Hebrew literature. This puritanism shows itself in all kinds of queer and interesting ways; in a distrust of "Jesuitry and all the powers of darkness," in the conviction that a "Tory" must be someone stupid or wicked, in an admiration for little Nell ("my goddess"), in a curious nervous apprehension as if hell-fire were perpetually just round the corner, and in a still more curious but even more characteristic "desire to damp enthusiasm or joy." He had the puritan's longing for certainties and distrust of adventure and speculation; "my tendencies are all towards making everything secure; properly protecting lines of communication and covering the retreat." Carlyle, of course, was extremely important to him, but newer "prophets" did not interest him much: "I was told the other day to read Neitsche (is this spelt right?). Have you read him? I have not, but I have a kind of presentiment that his 'newer cognition' would do me no good." It was perhaps this kind of "presentiment" which made him feel that the opening years of this century were so "barren."

He belonged to a generation which took itself and life very seriously, the generation of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Tennyson. Although he found Renan an "immense help," he thought the French critic was "often disagreeable, especially about women." Levity, even in the very young, he disliked: "I should never permit the slightest levity in a child toward mountains, stars, the Bible, or anything sublime, nor towards anything beautiful." Not even a giggle at Abraham Lincoln's beard, and no parodying of "Twinkle, Twinkle." During the Boer War this earnestness became quite imposing:—

> A more cowardly Government than this Government never existed, and it *therefore* bullies the Boers . . . Pray stir up everybody who has a conscience to protestation. Don't let Mabel swerve. Excuse my earnestness. All art, literature, seem to me a mockery now—mere trifling.

Is it mere perversity that makes one feel rather sympathetic towards Mabel and her apparent tendency to "swerve" about these matters of conscience which are so much more important than art and literature? These remarks and a hundred others in the letters or recorded in the Diary render White a rather distant figure, distant enough to be a little unsympathetic, yet not remote enough to be quaint and a discovery.

And yet this is only one side of Hale White; there was another and more attractive aspect. He often raps out an admirable phrase like this: "It is not understood that

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And These Are Just Half the Contributors to the Number With Which
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there are certain truths which justify expression in a dialect different from that of the House of Commons." His judgments on music are peculiarly attractive, especially his suspicions of Wagner's "metaphysics," his adoration for Mozart, and his delight in Scarlatti and Couperin. He is delightful, too, when he is explaining how much more he enjoys looking at a large cart-horse than at motor-cars filled with stock-jobbers' wives. His denunciations of "Respectability" and of the middle-class society of Crowborough are just and well expressed; "the demoralization of servant-girls is a favorite topic with the women, the wickedness of preferring Eastbourne and Brighton shops to the charms of the Villa. They do not see that this general movement is a thing not to be denounced but to be explained." But perhaps the middle-class society of Crowborough had a right to be explained as well?

The Groombridge Diary is not quite so easy to read as White's own letters, but it tells simply and without affectation the story of Hale White's last years and of Mrs. White's beautiful devotion and service to him. This was, of course, the great consolation and support of his old age; it is a charming and perhaps unique episode in literary history. The directness of Mrs. White's narrative is delightful, with such remarks as: "After dinner we talked of the Royal Family," or, "He has acknowledged to me this morning his strong instinct for trying to bring people round to his own point of view." Underneath all White's nervous apprehensions and stubborn puritanism there was something indefinable but attractive, something moral, no doubt, a mental rectitude, an absence of humbug. And there were strange yearnings:—

> If I had my life over again I would perpetually urge and strengthen myself to admire and lose myself in pure beauty. I would teach myself to *worship* the beauty of the autumn, the skies, the sea. This worship needs discipline . . . I would give myself up more systematically to beauty than to reason; make the study of beauty a business.

But even that only proves how essentially White was a religious-minded man.

RICHARD ALDINGTON.

Isvor

Isvor, the Country of Willows, by Princess Marie Bibesco. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $3.00

THE mistress of feudal estates in Roumania leaves Paris to go back to her own land, drawn by a sort of mystic nostalgia to the people whose lives belong to her. She sets herself a year among them to decide whether to live there always, where she is in a sense rooted, or to renounce this land and live another, more personal life away from it. It is a question of her own harmony. The book, though it tells of peasants, is entirely subjective.

The peasants of Roumania are an old people in an old land. The Christian rhythm by which they order their lives is crossed underneath by a pagan rhythm, a sort of pervasive counterpoint that beats to the secret pulsing of the earth, and carries still a hint of Pan. It appears in their lives in ways they do not understand or even question, but which they follow spontaneously. They belong to the eternal race of peasants, and protected still from machine progress, they live as peasants have always lived, having intercourse with the Powers of the earth, propitiating them by rites and magic to secure the harmony that is their need. The lady of Isvor writes almost entirely about the feast days and rites and ceremonies of her peasants, and through her description one feels the depth of their traditions. She writes in soft colors of Arcadian freshness.

Although the story is about the peasants, yet in the end the book is a record of her own soul. The lives of simple people always produce in the sophisticated a sense of fatality, of the inexorable simplicity of the human cycle. And they produce envy, envy of minds that are constant, credulous of unseen beauties, and unbeset by doubt. The lady of Isvor feels the fatality of her peasants, but she is unable to give it, for she herself stands between, inevitably interpreting, straining, sifting their reality through her self, an alien mind that by its very nature is barred from expressing what it cannot be. She yearns for the life of these people, to participate in their strange religion, to belong to them. Yet she is barred by the impassable gulf that separates those who live on the land from those who own it, the rich from the poor, the conscious from the unconscious livers. She is a woman who loves but who cannot possess.

> Outza says that those who have embraced each other during Easter night, will see each other again in the next world. And on the steps of the church they were all exchanging kisses.
>
> But myself? None of them ventured to embrace me. I shall have nobody.

But myself?—that is the wistful cry of this book, the cry of a soul that has been set free and beats its wings on the outside of the cage. When at the end, the mistress of Isvor decides to stay among her own people, she is dedicating herself to a lonely impersonal passion. E. V.

A CORRECTION

The attention of the editors has been called by the chairman of the committee of inquiry of the Association of University Professors to two inaccuracies of detail in the editorial, The Geographical Eclipse, appearing in our issue of November 26. We are grateful for this opportunity to correct them. (1) We stated that graduate work has been discontinued in six out of eight of the older departments of Clark University. The fact is that six out of eight "had been either discontinued or apparently marked for discontinuance by June, 1923." Since that time various circumstances, among them the receipt of a large bequest for work in psychology from the estate of former President Hall, have led to the re-establishment of two of the eight. (2) We stated that geography accounted for eight percent of the "attendance." In fact, the percentage of students in geography was slightly over twelve; geography accounted for eight percent of the "elections."

Contributors

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